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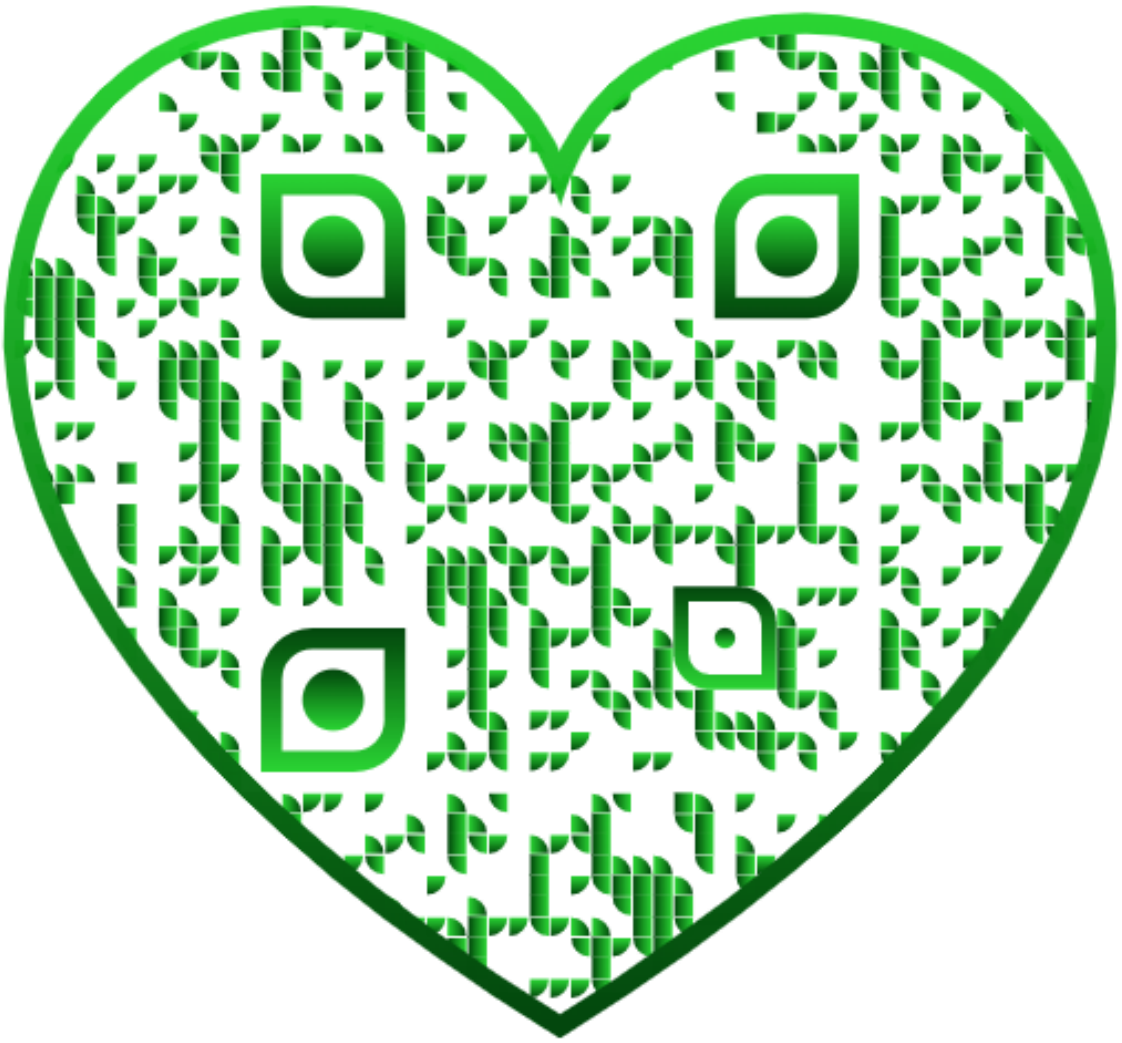

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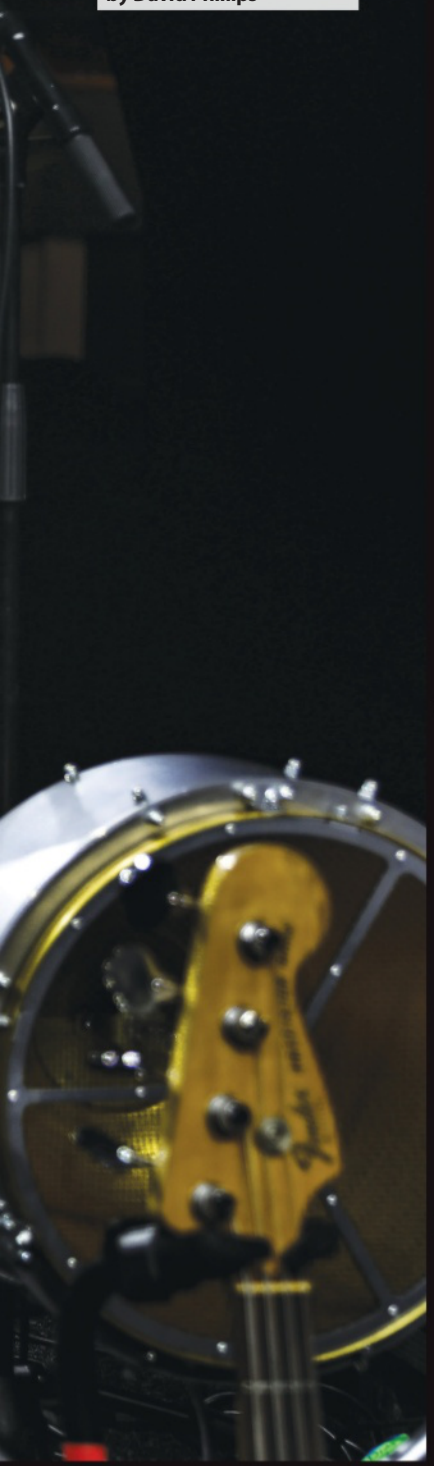

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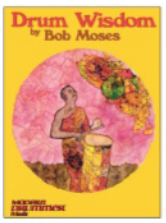

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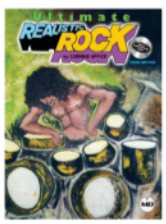

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Past, Present, and Future

Music, drumming, and art (in general) is about past, present, and future. It's a fine line to walk. If you are too much in the past, you are an *out of touch dinosaur.* If you are too much in the future, you are too radical, and no one is prepared for your revolutionary contributions and opinions. And the present is a fleeting moment that is gone as soon as you define or analyze it.

Thankfully with *Modern Drummer* digital issues we can be much more in the present than ever before. As I write this, I am also writing an interview that will appear in *Modern Drummer* in two weeks. With print that could never happen! But we aren't forgetting about the past or the future either.

We are always trying to walk the line between appreciating the longevity of the drummers who have created and developed this artform of drumming and the drummers of the future. Those are the ones who are bending genres, creating hybrid musical approaches and musical instruments, and inventing new sounds. It is usually relatively easy to tell who the drummers of the present are. However, will their present careers take us into the future, do they have roots in the past, or are they merely white-hot burning flames for a fleeting moment. It's tough to tell, but we try.

What is sometimes forgotten is that just because you haven't heard a specific drummer on a favorite new recording or seen him give a clinic or a big concert, doesn't mean that he (or she) is no longer "relevant" to the present-day drumming and music world. Likewise, if someone is doing something drastic and different, that doesn't necessarily make them a visionary drummer of the future.

The truth is that the tree of great drumming, music, and art lives simultaneously in the past, present, *and* the future. The roots of the tree give it support and hold it steadfast. They provide nutrients. The trunk of the tree is the present, that is what everyone sees. But there are many rings deep under the bark of the tree. The branches reach outward and upward and drop seeds and leaves that might become the new trees of the future. Or those leaves may just become a pile of raked rubble waiting to be disposed. It's tough to tell which is which when they are still hanging on the tree.

That's what we at Modern Drummer are striving to do with every issue. We look at the tree, we honor and stay grounded in the past. We report on and observe the present. And we look outward and upward while nourishing the future of drumming and music. Sure, there will be some drumming leaves to rake, but even those old leaves will become mulch to nourish the new trees of the future.

Mark Griffith
Content Director

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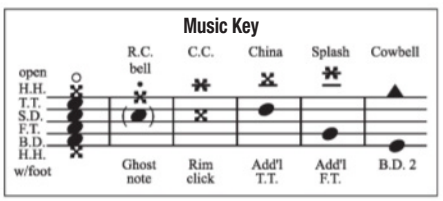

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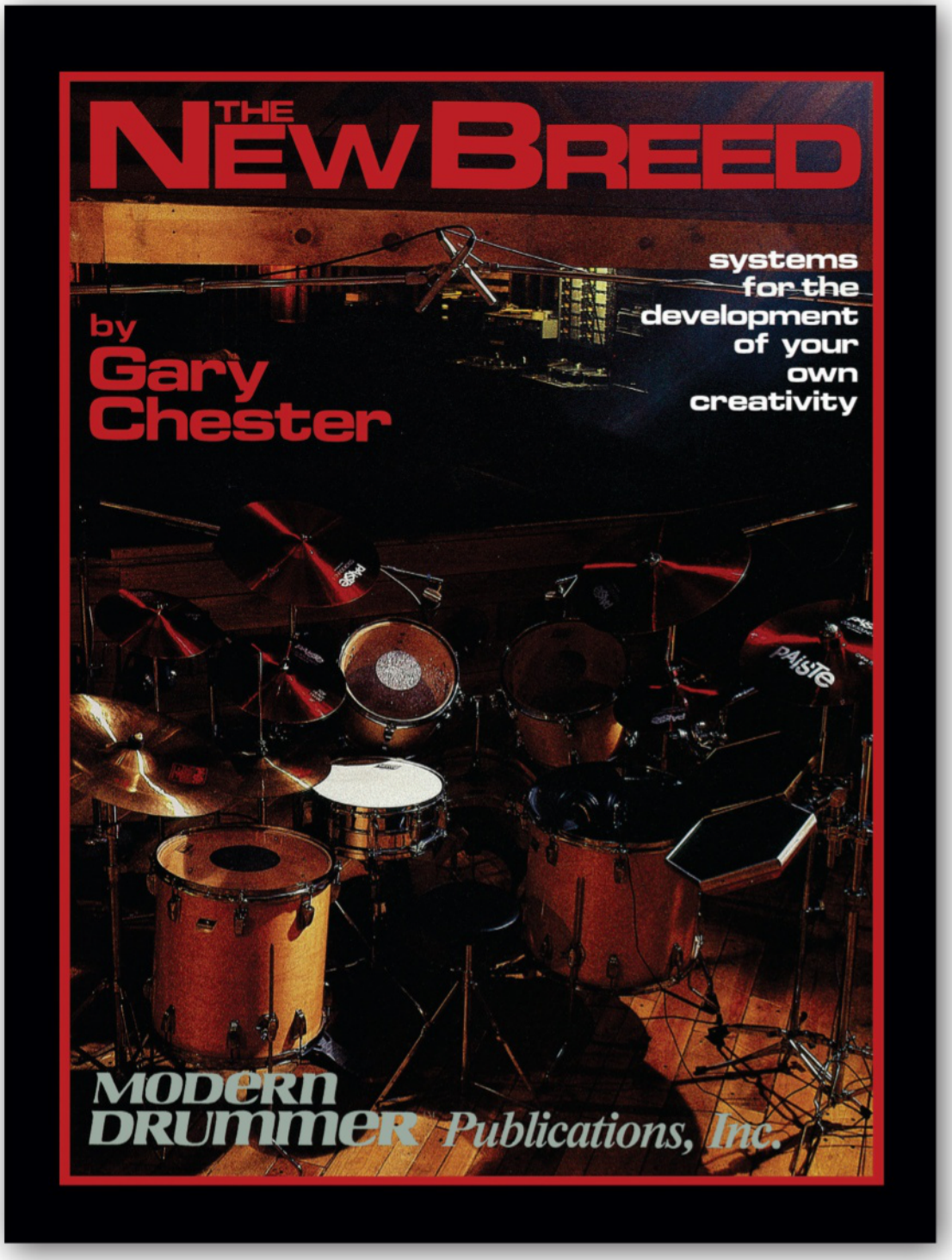

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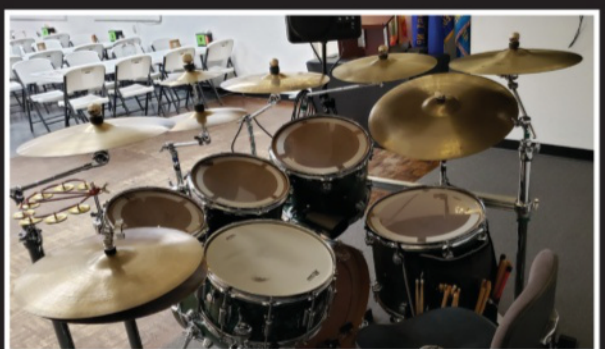
1997 Satin Emerald Green DW Kit

Mick McDermott plays classic country as well as classic rock, Western swing, and some Les Paul and Mary Ford for good measure on his 1997 DW kit refinished in satin emerald green by Spinelli Drums in St. Petersburg, FL. The sizes of the drums are 10, 12, 14, 16, and 22. He also uses a 6.5x14 Rogers dynasonic reissue in emerald green. All of the drums are mounted on a Pearl icon rack with Gibraltar cymbal arms, his pedals are a DW 5000 single and a 5000 hi hat. Mick's Cymbals are all Zildjian A's except where noted: 22" heavy ride, 18" med thin crash, 16" med thin crash (x2,) 16" A custom crash, 12" splash, 6" splash, and 14" New beat hi hats. he adds some percussion by LP including an LP cowbell and a LP hi hat jingle. His heads are Remo/DW stock heads on all of the toms, Remo pinstripe on batter of kick and a custom made head on resonant. The snare batter is an Evans ec2 coated. He uses Regaltip brushes and sticks. a Roc n Soc throne, and he sings through a Shure beta 57.



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The Next So-and-So!

By Peter Erskine

I'm tempted to begin each of my new *Modern Drummer* columns by writing "With everything else that's going on in the world…" because the unrelenting news cycles force me to question the relative importance of an artistic particular or a paradiddle. But since this is *Modern Drummer* and not Modern Politics (or Modern Ecology or Modern Psychology), I'm going to indulge in a rumination that I hope will prove insightful if not inciteful.

I came across a thread on the internet that proclaimed a relatively young drummer as being "The next Buddy Rich!" This of course invited commentary from persons with opinions that went all over the map, which in turn generated responses until the discussion turned acrimonious in fairly short order. I'll admit, it got me to thinking.

The Peter Erskine Library

Since I just turned the ripe old age of 68, let me get one thing out of the way: young drummers today can outplay — and display drumming abilities far beyond what I thought possible – the drumming standards of yore. So, I harbor no grudges or suffer from illusory selective memory about my own drumming skills or those of my age peers. Indeed, much of what I see tells me that we have done something right in terms of educating, even though much of what I see exceeds what I know to be taught in many schools. All to say, there's much good that's coming out of the ether known as the internet.

Having said that, I lament that younger players do not have the playing opportunities of old. Heck, I lament that "my" generation did not quite enjoy the playing opportunities of my heroes (even though we came close in terms of touring and nightly performances). Think about the heyday of touring jazz musicians: 2 to 3 (even 4!) sets each night, 50 weeks a year, often playing opposite another great band. That level of competitive playing occasions combined with exposure to legendary drumming figures in-person, PLUS the chance for one of them to either praise or criticize you … now THAT'S school!

We all have musical idols and heroes. In my own case, I worshipped the drumming of Art Blakey and Max Roach and Don Lamond and Louis Hayes and Shelly Manne and Mel Lewis and Grady Tate and Elvin Jones and Tony Williams, and... *you get the idea*. And Buddy Rich, too. I'm sure that most of you share the following sentiment: I would never presume to be the *NEXT* one of any of them! And I would resist anyone attempting to label me as such. First, it's presumptuous as hell and, second, it denies me the chance to be the next ME.

Setting any artist up as "the next" naturally invites comparison. I don't know about you, but I have enough things to contend with in my day-to-day life without worrying about defending myself as being the "next" so-and-so. People love to ascribe labels to others, but for my money: no thanks. This is all said to recognize that, for the hapless drummer who is being heralded as the "next so-and-so," well … it's usually not their fault (if anyone has enough hubris or poor judgement to declare *themselves* the "next Buddy Rich" or Tony Williams or Elvin Jones, then they deserve whatever criticisms come their way, in my opinion).

That aside, such glib comparisons miss the very obvious elephant in the room: drummers of old played in bands, and often for bandleaders or bandmates who were VERY discerning and demanding in their expectations of knowledge, ability, and excellence from the drummer. I've recounted pianist Nat Pierce saying to me when I was 18-years-old, "You're a nice kid. You can't swing for shit, but you're a nice kid." Or Mel Lewis excoriating me in *Downbeat* magazine for not having bottom or resonant heads on my toms and bass drum (I found out later that Lennie DiMuzio and Armand Zildjian both told Mel to "*take it easy on Peter, he's just a kid,*" but you know what? Mel Lewis was right, and I learned from his criticism).

Peter and one of his musical idols; Elvin Jones.

The Peter Erskine Library

In addition to my treating elders with incredible respect (verbally and with body language) — and I'm talking about just about ANY drummer who had played longer than I had — I was always prepared for the possibility that this musician knew more about the music than I did at that stage of my life. We all have varying levels of confidence and humility. My innate (or engendered) sense of humility allowed me to learn an incredible amount of data as well as praise. And we all respond well to praise! (Exploring this a bit more: when we treat older persons with respect, we are treating the older version of ourselves with respect. Likewise, when we treat younger persons with respect, we are treating the younger person inside each of us with respect. Wait, maybe this "is" *Modern Psychology*.)

I wish that ALL OF US could play more in-person and with others. The pandemic took a bad situation of changing musical demographics and made it challenging beyond recognition. So, with that, the Jazz Insights column would like to congratulate all of us for having done the best we could these past couple of years. And I salute everyone who is a creator, whether behind the drums or behind the scenes creating live playing opportunities.

Having said THAT, the Jazz Insights column acknowledges that the one-way street of play-alongs is NOT the same as playing with other human beings. Other musicians who are counting and struggling with their own set of challenges and who are depending on the drummer to provide good time (clarity of the beat and its subdivisions, plus steadiness of tempo), stylistic "correctness," proper set-ups as well as playing of ensemble figures (rhythms), dynamics, plus those hard-to-quantify elements of musicality and excitement (or steadiness, or groove). Add to all of the above: that which is said or left unsaid OFF the bandstand. And showing up on-time for the lobby leave or soundcheck, and so on. Not to mention having to deal with confusing or conflicting musical signals from others on the bandstand.

Music is many things to many people. Me? I love to play because it is fun. And I take it as serious as a heart attack. I can admit to varying measures of envy, admiration as well as sorrow for the drummers today who are compelled to make their mark or prove their mettle by virtue of YouTube clicks ("be sure to Follow Me and to click on the Like button") … Good for you if you can live by this particular sword.

And now I turn to General George Patton (legendary US soldier who fought and died in the Second World War) who wrote, "For over a thousand years Roman conquerors returning from the wars enjoyed the honor of triumph, a tumultuous parade. In the procession came trumpeters, musicians and strange animals from conquered territories, together with carts laden with treasure and captured armaments. The conquerors rode in a triumphal chariot, the dazed prisoners walking in chains before him. Sometimes his children robed in white stood with him in the chariot or rode the trace horses. A slave stood behind the conqueror holding a golden crown and whispering in his ear a warning: *that all glory is fleeting (sic transit gloria).*"

My advice? Don't play for likes. Play for the music. And don't try to be the next somebody else. Be the next and best version of yourself!

Check out Peter's drummer profile page, and get a copy of his Legends book at moderndrummer.com

Cardiovascular Fitness for Strength and Longevity

By James Petercsak

In my series of articles, under the "Health, Wellness, and Drumming" section of *Modern Drummer*, we have explored the many of the benefits of weight training and maintaining healthy musculature. This is done to keep our joints pain free so it won't hinder drumming. We've identified the essential factors for pain free progression in the gym, like proper volume; picking the right exercises; technique; and the mental aspect of training. We've also described the importance of strength, and how your collective muscle tissue functions as an endocrine organ. In this article, we'll dive into to the details of cardiovascular training, and how it fits into a health and wellness program.

Muscle mass is of little importance if you don't have the cardiorespiratory fitness to power it. People tend to pick between the two broad categories of exercise – Strength training, or Cardio. But the term is *strength* AND *conditioning* for a reason, and while you might prefer one over the other, you should be doing both. Don't assume that the two categories act against each other; in fact HRV (or heart rate variability) is one of the most important indicators of performance and possibly the most important metric to recover from weight training and to move your body optimally. Cardiovascular fitness is important not only for keeping your body in shape, or transforming your body, but for the avoidance of illness and disease.

Why is heart rate variability a good thing?

Your body has many systems that let it adapt to where you are and what you're doing. Your heart's variability reflects how adaptable your body can be. If your heart rate is highly variable, this is usually evidence that your body can adapt to many kinds of changes. People with high heart rate variability are usually less stressed as they can adapt better to changes (either physical or emotional). In general, low heart rate variability is considered a sign of current or future health problems. It's a metric that shows your body is less resilient and may struggle to handle changing situations. It's also more common in people who have higher resting heart rates. That's because when your heart is beating faster, there's less time between beats, reducing the opportunity for variability. This is often the case with conditions like diabetes, and heart arrhythmia.

Before we get into the specifics of cardio training, we need to make one thing clear - Building muscle requires a caloric surplus, meaning you need to eat more calories than you burn. Losing fat requires a caloric deficit, meaning that you need to consume less calories than you burn. While it does get more complicated than that, at the end of the day, calories matter. Having said that, you cannot build maximum muscle and lose maximum fat simultaneously; they are two conflicting goals. If your main goal right now is to pack on as much muscle as humanly possible in the shortest time frame than I would recommend that you limit the amount of intense cardio. However, the majority of people reading this probably aren't looking to become a defensive end for an NFL team or a sumo wrestler, so get your cardio in, it's good for you!

Cardio is a much-debated subject in the fitness industry. Many experts claim that you should never do cardio when trying to build muscle. Others state that you should do high amounts of cardio at all times no matter what your goals are. Intervals are the favorite method of some, while others prefer long duration, steady state cardio. No wonder there is so much confusion. In my opinion, properly planned cardio methods can help you build muscle and stay lean at the same time. The addition of cardio to your training program allows you to eat more muscle building calories without the risk of them turning to body-fat. Not only can proper cardio methods help you stay lean, but they may also help you build muscle more effectively by increasing the production of anabolic hormones. It will also aide in your body's ability to move optimally, something as drummers we're all interested in.

Different types of Cardiovascular training

First, we have low intensity, long duration cardio. This is a long, up-tempo walk or a very slow, low effort bike ride. This type of exercise has a lower impact on muscle loss and for this reason is a favorite method of many heavyweight athletes. It doesn't burn a ton of calories, which is why it needs to be done for 45-60 minutes, 6-12 times per week in order for you to notice any significant results. This method is the best form of cardio for heavily muscled individuals who are looking to hold on to as much muscle as possible while

simultaneously getting leaner. It is time consuming and only burns significant calories if you have a decent amount of muscle on your frame already. Also, this method is not very effective at improving your cardiovascular health because it does not elevate your heart rate significantly.

Medium to high intensity, steady state cardio is typically done a bike, treadmill, stair climber or elliptical machine. The standard recommendations are to work at 65-75% of your maximum heart rate for 20-40 minutes. The oldest and most basic way to determine your max heart rate is to subtract your age from 220. So, if you are twenty years old your max heart rate would be 200 and you would want to stay at around 70% of that which would be 140 beats per minute. This isn't the most scientific formula, but it is the easiest and works for our purposes. This is more effective at burning calories than low intensity, steady state cardio and doesn't require as much time. With this method you basically work hard for 20-40 minutes straight without ever changing the intensity. When using this method of cardio, you might be able to hold a conversation, but it would be annoying, as you'll be breathing heavily. This method has been used for years with great success by many people in an effort to lose body-fat. The problem with this method is that it does not elevate your metabolism for more than two hours after doing it, whereas weight training elevates your metabolism for two days. Because of this, I recommend that you fit this into your off days of weight training, 3 times a week. Doing too much of this type of training can elevate cortisol levels, which is the hormone that can break-down muscle tissue.

Even though this method can be very beneficial, we need to be careful about the duration and frequency. There are some negatives associated with long duration, steady state cardio and present a "U" shaped curve with diminishing results if done excessively. Excessive amounts of endurance activity have been shown to: lower immune system function, increase the production of oxidative free radicals, and lead to a degeneration of the joints (especially the hips, knees and ankles)

The next form of cardio is high intensity interval training. This method involves performing short bursts of the highest intensity you can muster followed by a down period of lower intensity which allows you to recover before repeating the sequence. Typical interval recommendations are 30-60 second bursts followed by an active rest period of 60-120 seconds. This

A simple bike trainer can be a great investment if you don't have a stationary bike. Most trainers will generate enough resistance to elevate your heart rate for a very effective workout.

is typically done for 15- 30 minutes. One big upside about high intensity interval training is that it elevates your metabolism for up to 48 hours after doing it. This effect is not seen with traditional methods of cardio. Steady state cardio burns extra calories during the workout, and for around two hours after completing. The main benefit of high intensity interval cardio is that your metabolism will be revving like crazy for two days after your workout. So you are burning extra calories far longer and far more efficiently than you do when you rely only on steady state cardio.

The problems with interval training typically are with the prescription recommendations. Firstly, unless you're in tremendous shape, 30-60 seconds of 100% all-out effort is extremely difficult (and potentially dangerous). It can take years of training and technique training to get to that level. Secondly, the rest period prescriptions of 45-60 seconds are also far too short for most. Think about it; sprinters who are the most ripped athletes on earth next to competitive bodybuilders, typically sprint a short distance and then rest anywhere from three to five minutes before repeating the effort. I am not suggesting that you need to rest as long as this, but I think that limiting your rest periods to 45 seconds, especially as a beginner, is going to compromise the quality of your training and therefore, your results.

Once again, the name of the game is progressive overload, and you need to constantly strive to beat your previous performance

My third problem with interval training is that most advocates of this method tell you to simply lower the intensity during the "rest" period and not actually rest. The fact of the matter is you should crank the intensity down to next to zero on whatever you are doing. Too much lactate production, which is signified by the intense burning you get in your legs and glutes, will severely compromise strength gains. Drowning your fast twitch muscle fibers in a pool of lactate is the best way to turn them into slow twitch fibers. This will make it much harder to get bigger, stronger, and faster. So, whenever you are using a bike to do interval training you always need to make sure that you drop the resistance to zero on the "coasting" portion of the intervals. A better option would be to get off the bike and walk on the treadmill or something.

Which type of cardio training is best for you?

The answer to this question is easy: It's the one you'll stick with and do consistently. For many, walking everyday can be a huge win. If you're new to this, you always want to start slow and progress over time. That is why I always start with walking for people who have lower cardiovascular fitness and/or have been sedentary and wanting to make a change. If you'd like to try some of the various cardio options discussed, I recommend doing them in addition to the strength training programs we discussed in previous issues. Of course, always consult your physician or licensed medical provider before starting any exercise program.

We can start by doing two medium intensity, steady state cardio workouts for the first two weeks. These should be done on a stationary or recumbent bike. The bike is the weapon of choice because there is no eccentric component to pedaling on a bike. Eccentric training is what makes you sore and might possibly delay your recovery. Therefore, for the purposes of maintaining or losing body-fat while simultaneously increasing muscle mass, the bike is the number one choice for most beginners or those who have extremely limited recovery ability. There is no sprinting, no intervals, no active rest periods; just 15-30 minutes of steady state cardio at a medium intensity and maintain for the duration of the workout. In other words, it should be hard work, but not so much that you can't hold a conversation - It should just feel annoying to do so. After you complete the first four sessions and feel prepared, you can try adopting some higher intensity intervals on week 3.

To begin, warm up on the bike for 1-2 minutes at a moderate pace. After you feel warm and limber, dial up the bike resistance to a high level "sprint" as fast as you possibly can for ten seconds straight. This may not seem like it would be that difficult but when you crank the intensity of the bike way up there and give it all you have, ten seconds can seem like an eternity. You should be working incredibly hard but not to the point where you're pushing yourself to the absolute limit. After your ten second bout you are going to lower the resistance on the machine all the way down as low as it will go and coast at a slow to moderate pace until you feel like you are ready for another sprint. Don't wait so long that your heart rate nearly returns to normal, or so short that you feel ill. The problem with giving a set rest period is that everyone is completely different and have different levels of cardiovascular fitness. I just want you to work as hard as you can for 16 minutes and get as many high quality, high intensity sprints as possible. Some of you may only need 60 seconds between sprints while some of you may need three minutes; it doesn't matter. All that matters is that you work hard and make progress during each workout.

The principles of effective cardio training are no different than the principles of effective weight training. Once again, the name of the game is progressive overload, and you need to constantly strive to beat your previous performance. This is where your training journal comes in handy. You can record the length of your high intensity bursts, the length of your active rest periods, the total distance traveled, and the total amount of calories burned during the session.

In the next issue, we'll discuss more advanced forms of cardio and provide options on how to fit that into your strength training sessions. But the most important point to drive home is that cardiovascular fitness is a major driver of longevity and wellness. If you want to be strong and fit when you're 80, you can't afford to be of average fitness when you're 50. You now have a bunch of cardio options to choose from, but the most important point is to do the work. So good luck and train hard!

The information provided herein is intended for your general knowledge only and is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice, or a substitute for medical advice. Before attempting any exercises mentioned in this article, consult with your doctor.

Check out James' *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

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NEW and NOTABLE

Evans introduces dB One Heads and Cymbals

EVANS Drumheads, the most technologically advanced drumheads on earth, is introducing a revolutionary new suite of products, dB reduced volume drumheads and cymbals. The dB product suite includes dB Zero, a rebrand of the popular SoundOff mesh drumheads, and the introduction of dB One Drumheads and Cymbals.

Drummers now have two options. dB Zero reduces the drumhead's volume to the lowest level possible and is ideal for silent practice and use with drum triggers and sensors. With dB One, drummers can maintain their acoustic kit's natural tone and feel, but at only 20% the volume of traditional acoustic heads.

"The dB One heads are an incredible practice tool, *especially* if you have volume restraints wherever you drum," says Whitechapel and Light the Torch drummer Alex Rüdinger. "The first time I really laid into them was at 2:30 in the morning, with other people asleep in the house, two stories up. No one woke up or even heard a peep!"

Available in patented tom, bass, and snare heads, dB One drumheads experience an authentic bounce and attack with ShockWeave MeshTM, Kinetic Transfer FoamTM (KTF), and dB One's innovative Impact Patch striking surface. Additionally, the wire-free Snare SimTM treatment tackles the once impossible-to-fake-buzz and crack of acoustic snares at a reduced level.

The new dB One suite is rounded out by dB One Cymbals, the first cymbals to sport the EVANS brand and designed to balance and match with the dB One heads as a system. In addition, each cymbal features EVANS' patented dBalanceTM technology, a precision-perforated volume reduction system punched directly into the nano-plated stainless alloy surface in a mesmerizing spiral pattern. This meticulous approach to attenuation achieves a chime and resonance as articulate as many full volume sets but at 20% the volume.

To learn more about dB please visit **https://ddar.io/dBOne.PR.**

Gretsch Drums Introduces the USA Custom Ridgeland Snare Drum and New Colors For USA Custom, Broadkaster & Brooklyn

Gretsch Drums proudly introduces the USA Custom Ridgeland Snare drum to their celebrated range of snare of drums. At almost half-inch thick and made from a fusion of woods, this new drum has a sound that is warm, powerful and loud!

For nearly 40 years, Gretsch Drums have been hand-crafted in Ridgeland, South Carolina using the finest materials available. It's here that a team of dedicated artisans consider every detail to ensure that each drum possesses "That Great Gretsch Sound." The USA Custom Ridgeland Snare Drum has been developed in the time-honored tradition of Gretsch drums to showcase the dedication and passion of these artisans.

The 0.4" shell, made of maple, gum and poplar, features a hybrid bearing edge that combines the classic Gretsch 30 degree edge with an old-school Broadkaster-style roundover; the result is a warm, full-bodied tone with plenty of attack. These new snare drums are equipped with sturdy 4mm die-cast counter hoops, the ever-popular Lightning Throw-Off, 20-strand snare wires and Gretsch Permatone drumheads. Custom made, the Ridgeland Snare Drums are available in 5x14 and 6.5x14 sizes and in all Gretsch Nitron, Satin or Gloss Lacquer finishes to perfectly match any drum set.

The Ridgeland, born in the South, made to inspire. For a preview of the Ridgeland snare drum, watch the video **here**. For more information about the USA Custom Ridgeland Snare Drum, other Gretsch drums and artists, please go to **http://www.gretschdrums.com/**

Gretsch is expanding the available colors options for the USA Custom, Broadkaster and Brooklyn drum kits ranges in 2022. Turquoise Pearl and Tangerine Metallic have been added to the USA Custom and Broadkaster finish choices, and the Brooklyn kits can now be found in Antique Oyster.

The new bright, vivid colors offer an arresting choice to drummers who want to add a visual statement to the acoustic excellence of the USA Custom and Broadkaster kits. The eye-catching Turquoise Pearl Nitron finish moves like a restless ocean, full of iridescent blues and greens. In contrast, the strikingly hot Tangerine Metallic, in either a satin or gloss finish, is full of energy, vibrant and fiery.

Brooklyn Kits adds a new finish with the introduction of the soon to be classic, Antique Oyster Nitron. This finish is reminiscent of rich silky folds of golden butter, that change with the light to radiate warmth and style. The lustrous wrap is refined and subtle, perfect for drummers looking to enhance any setting - stage, studio or home - with a kit that looks as good as it sounds.
To find out more about the new colors and all the other Gretsch Drums please go to **gretschdrums.com**

Dunnett acquires Intellectual Property Rights to Milestone Percussion

Ronn Dunnett is pleased to announced he has acquired the intellectual property rights to iconic Canadian drum company Milestone Percussion. Milestone Percussion was founded in Vancouver in the early 1970's by Michael Clapham. At the time. Milestone quickly became the leader in fibreglass drums which were reknowned for thier sonic consistency and durability.

"Michael created not just a timeless line of drums, but a brand that deviated from many of the conventional norms of the time. The elegant simplicity of the Milestone logo was matched by the innovative drums he manufactured. The Milestone brand is singular in that regard." said Ronn Dunnett, president and CEO of Dunnett Classic Drums Ltd. "Milestone is a true part of Canadian history and at 50 years old, a heritage brand.

Milestone founder Michael Clapham was born in 1938 in London, England and immigrated to Canada at the age of 18. His career began at Vancouver's Drum Village where he worked as a salesman and drum instructor. He eventually purchased the store, operating it until 1980 when he sold it to Ray Ayotte, giving himself the freedom to design and develop the Milestone brand and products.

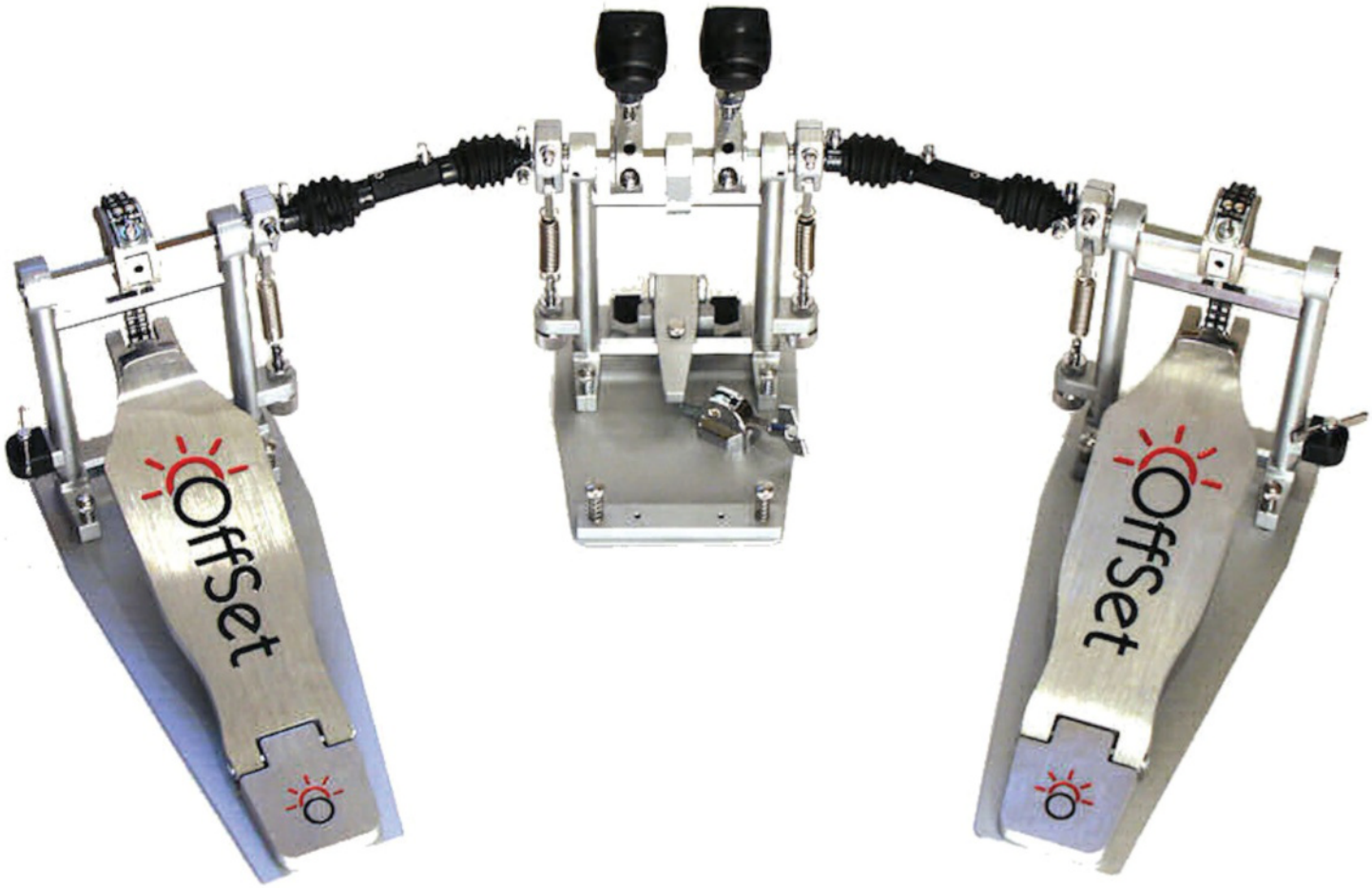
The drums Clapham designed were embraced by legendary artists such as Gary McCracken (Max Webster), Jerry Mercer (April Wine) and producers / engineers such as Bob Ezrin (Pink Floyd "The Wall") where the unmistakeable sound of fibreglass wove itself into the fabric of their music. Michael Clapham passed away in Vancouver on September 14, 2016.

"Fifty years is a very long time for a brand to survive on inertia, and yet today Milestone remains a beloved brand and I plan to celebrate that. I have always loved the brand and as a young drummer coveted the kits I saw my drum heros playing. As it was when I began work on restoring the George Way drum company and preserving George's legacy, it is an honour to pick up where Michael left off and with the blessing of the Clapham estate. Production on the new line of Milestone snare drums is well under way with orders in the qeue. Those drums will pay appropriate homage to Michael's work and legacy.

PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

Offset Eclipse Double Bass Drum Pedal

By Jim Toscano and Nic Kubes



I have played on a double bass kit from a young age. I had two 24" bass drums with one of those hoop clamps for the hi hat stand so I could fold the legs and set up the hi hat pedal directly next to the bass drum pedal. This was before two legged and no legged hi hat stands even existed. But I realized moving two bass drums around was not fun or easy and I bought my first double bass pedal in the 90's. As with most drummers I felt that the double bass pedals were never able to provide the symmetrical feel of playing two bass drums. I have been looking for a symmetrical solution for setting up a completely ambidextrous drum set.

With OffSet you are set up with the snare drum centered in front of the bass drum. The typical double bass pedal puts your body position at an angle, moving you to either the right or left or your drum kit. Thus, rotating you away from the floor tom side. This makes it harder to reach without rotating your torso. With the OffSet pedal and snare drum centered, your floor tom and ride are much more ergonomically accessible.

Overview and Features

The Eclipse OffSet double pedal is a completely symmetrical and highly adjustable double pedal for both lefty and righty players. This pedal is well made and is a total game changer, an innovative and high-end pedal without the high-end price. Whether you are a hardcore double bass player or someone who uses a double pedal more casually to embellish and add punctuation to your ideas, you will love the symmetry and adjustability of the OffSet Eclipse.

The pedal board height, beater distance, spring tension, and drive wheel are all completely adjustable. You can dial in a feel that is perfect for you. At each joint location there is a precision bearing to give you the most smooth and consistent motion possible. The adjustable cam or drive wheel can effectively change diameter by sliding it forward or back on the drive shaft, giving you a range from 1.5" to 3" in diameter. This gives you the choice or blend of speed and power. The pedal comes with a double chain drive and there is also a direct drive conversion kit available. The pedal features 2 adjustable spikes on each of the three sections, plus strips of hook and loop on the bottom to make sure none of the pedal sections move at all. There is a built-in drum key holder on each pedal. With so many moving parts it's great to always have a drum key handy.

Construction

The pedal features high quality construction. There are precision bearings at every connection and adjustable cams. The drive shaft of the center housing has a flat area on top to ensure that there is no slipping of the drive shafts. The drive rods have universal joints on both ends to ensure that you get the perfect angle for your setup. OffSet has parts readily available in the event that you need

something replaced. The brushed aluminum finish is great looking and provides great construction with lighter weight. The pedal housings are steel and aluminum and are very durable.

Adjustability

There are many adjustments on the OffSet pedal so that you can dial in the perfect feel for you as an individual player. You have the beater height and beater angle to the bass drum head. The center beater housing has a spring located on each side to provide a smooth motion for each beater and allows for more controlled oscillations. Additionally, there is a spring to the inside of each pedal board. With a total of four springs, you can make sure that the feel is identical from one pedal to the other and provides maximum control and consistency. You have individual adjustments for each pedal board height. Remember that the two center springs adjust beater feel and the springs located on the pedal boards adjust pedal board feel. The adjustable drive wheels give you further adjustment to fine tune the feel to your individual needs.

Setup

OffSet Pedals are very simple to put together. The center beater housing connects to the hoop with a hoop clamp adjuster to the side of the pedal board for easy access. Traditionally the hoop clamp adjustment is located under the pedal board. You place each beater in the housing to the desired height, adjust the counterweight on each beater to make sure the throw feels perfect for you. Finally, you connect the two drive rods to the center beater housing section and then to each pedalboard and you are ready to play. The two provided beaters have a hard plastic side and a felt side so you can choose your attack. Your snare stand sits right in front of the center housing and doesn't conflict at all with the beater movement.

Feel and sound

It is important to note that both pedals feel identical which is never the case with traditional double bass pedals. The slave pedal on traditional double pedals always feels different to the primary pedal. The drive rod on traditional double bass pedals is usually very long and creates the perception of drag on the pedal action. To me, traditional slave pedals always feel too light, meaning the beater throw never has the same impact as the main pedal no matter how many adjustments I try to make, it just never feels the same. OffSet solved that problem. The snare drum never gets in the way of the center beater housing. The Footboard is 12.5" long so using heel up or down technique is possible. Additionally, it is smooth and well made. On regular double pedals one beater always hits off center. With OffSet both beaters hit in the center and provide equal punch, attack, and sound distribution.

Traveling

OffSet has two affordable pedal cases available. A soft case for more casual travel and a hard case for more rigorous travel conditions. The pedals come apart easily and quick and are not very heavy. When you reassemble them, you have minimal adjustments to get going.

Useful tips

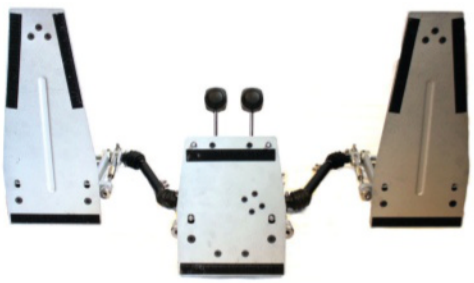
Make sure to make the same adjustments at the same time to both sides of the pedal, so that you keep the pedal feeling symmetrical.

Take your time with the setup and adjustment. With so many moving parts it will take you some time & experimentation to dial in the pedals to your exact specifications.

Make the first adjustments visually. For example, if the pedal board height looks identical chances are it will feel very much the same. After the pedal is set up then check for feel.

I will often compare each side with the same foot to ensure that the feeling is the same.

Use the attached drum key and hex keys to keep everything tight and properly adjusted.



Satisfaction and Availability

OffSet stands behind their product and guarantees your satisfaction, all pedals come with a 2-year limited warranty. Customer service and parts are fast, personal, and efficient directly from their OffSet website. This is a small company, and they stand behind their product.

Conclusion

OffSet Pedals have completely changed the landscape of the double pedal game in every way. You can set up symmetrically, ergonomically, and never have to sacrifice comfort for your setup. Offset has introduced a single pedal that has the same footprint and adjustability for your single pedal work as well. Now maybe one day they will make a hi hat pedal to go with the other pedals! The offset drum pedal retails for $489.00 at **www.offsetpedal.com.**

Meinl's Pure Alloy Custom 20" & 22" Medium Thin Rides

By Brian Hill

Warm, Somewhat Dark, and Extremely Articulate

The folks at Meinl sent over one of their Pure Alloy Custom Medium Thin Rides for us to look at, and we're glad they did. Unlike the Byzance line which is hand hammered in Turkey with a B20 Bell Bronze alloy, the Pure Alloy Custom series is made in Germany utilizing what Meinl calls "Pure Alloy." The result is a very musical and professional grade instrument.

When I received the box from Meinl, I was initially surprised to see only one cymbal in the box. Normally, I would expect a mix of different cymbals from a specific line to review. I thought, this must be some "*plate*!" Well, it turns out that this really is, "*some plate!*" There's' a whole lot going on here, so let's get started.

Specs

Meinl's Pure Alloy Custom line has been turning heads since its introduction as a high-end professional cymbal. The Pure Alloy Customs have a clean and very musical quality that compliments all styles of music. However, according to Meinl, many requests were coming in requesting thinner versions within the line. The result is the medium-thin models represented here in the Custom 20" Pure Alloy Ride that we are reviewing.

The first thing that I noticed was its striking

appearance. The body of the cymbal is precision hammered and lathed, while the bell is what I like to call "virgin." It has no hammering or lathing, just a smooth, raw-looking bell that really stands out. Meinl finished the top playing surface with a beautiful finish called "Custom Smoked-Bronze." This finish gives hint to the over-all character of warmth and darkness inherent to the line. The underside of the cymbal is polished to a brilliant finish.

Sound

Meinl describes these rides as "Complex, Full-bodied, Sensitive, Smooth, Warm, and Musical." I fully agree. With a medium to low pitch and volume range, I find these rides to be extremely responsive and controllable. The stick response was exceptional and the stick "ping" had a great clarity. The cymbal's attack was warm and soft, and it's decay was fast. This is a cymbal that won't get lost in the mix at any volume. The wash of the cymbal brought a nice musicality to the mix without being overpowering. The mid to dark timbre works well with it's mid to long sustain characteristics. The bell was certainly clear and present, while the smooth raw appearance made it a great target that seemed hard to miss while playing.

Another thing that I noticed was the consistency and high quality of the cymbal. While tapping from the base of the bell to the edge, I found an even consistency of *pitch* from high to low, and in note *width* from thin to wide. I checked this characteristic with several rides that I had in my studio and thought the Meinl Pure Alloy Custom ride was actually superior in this respect. This is a well engineered piece of metal! Because of the medium thin make-up of the cymbal, it also provided a great crash without being too overbearing.

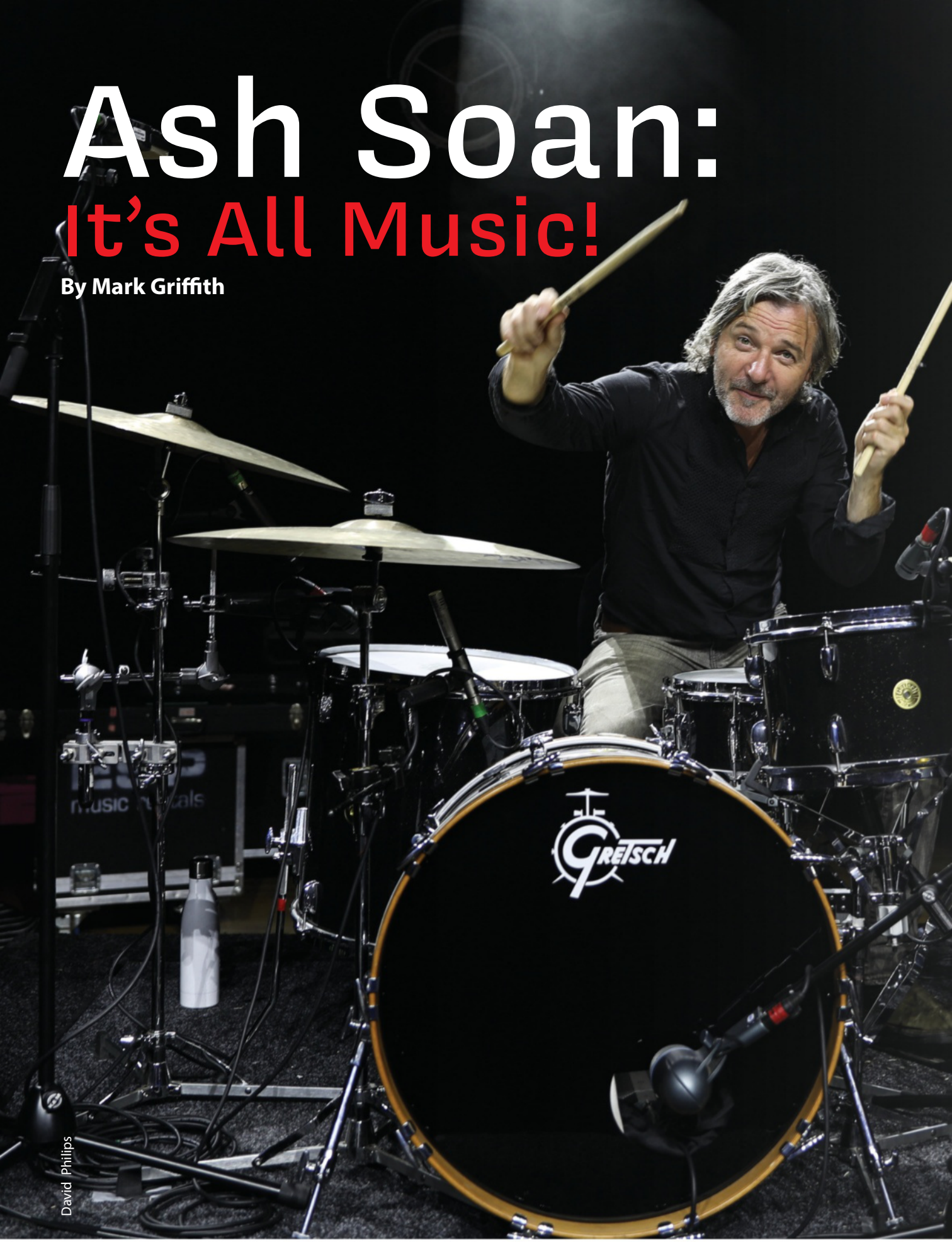
Conclusion

As with all aspects, I found this to be a very high-end offering to the over-all cymbal market. This is certainly a professional grade instrument worthy of real consideration. It seems that the Pure Alloy collection was created not only to be a superior cymbal line, but also to compete with established high-end offerings from the other major cymbal companies. The Pure Alloy Custom cymbal line (along with the Byzance line,) have solidly placed Meinl as one of the "Big Four" cymbal manufactures along with Paiste, Zildjian, and Sabian.

The Pure Alloy Custom Ride is a great general "go-to" cymbal that complimented everything I did with it. I like the dark and earthy qualities that are inherent to the cymbal's musicality while playing different styles of music. After playing this cymbal for a couple weeks, I couldn't imagine not wanting it in my set-up. I liked it so much that I actually bought it! Check out these beautiful and musical *plates* and all that Meinl has to offer at **meinlpercussion.com.**

Ash Soan:
It's All Music!

By Mark Griffith



David Philips

He's played on the Olympics with Mike Oldfield, the British version of *The Voice* for seven years, toured with Del Amitri, Squeeze, Faithless, The Waterboys and Mike Scott, Will Young, James Morrison, Marianne Faithfull, Sinead O' Connor, recorded with everyone from Rod Stewart and Billy Idol to Adele and Cher, as well as Seal, Celine Dion, James Morrison, Dua Lipa, Sam Smith, Robbie Williams, Elton John (*The Lion King*) and Alicia Keys. Also live shows with Bryan Adams, Van Morrison, Belinda Carlisle, Terry Reid, Jeff Lorber & Jimmy Haslip, Trevor Horn, Seal and Lol Creme of 10cc. He is at the top of the list for producers like Trevor Horn, Mark Taylor, Jimmy Napes, Steve Lipson and Fraser T. Smith, and he does soundtrack work with Hans Zimmer and Lorne Balfe. Now he is touring with Tori Amos, and Joss Stone, and he just recorded with Bob Marley (*yes you read that right!*) However, unless you are one of his millions of followers on social media, you might not even know his name. His humility is as big as the Atlantic, and his pocket is just as deep. He considers himself to be a 30-year overnight success, and he is sincerely excited that drummers "on this side of the pond" are learning his name. His name is Ash Soan.

MD: For a drummer as prolific as you are, it's amazing there isn't a whole lot of information on you out there yet. Your career has really begun to take of in the last 10 years, but you have been building your career for a long time. May I ask, how old are you?

AS: I'm 53 in December, and yes, my career has really begun to take off in recent years, but I have been working for a long time. It's strange, as a musician gets a little older, usually some doors start to close. I have seen that happen in generations before me. I consider myself very fortunate to have somehow kept myself in people minds, and the doors seem to keep opening.

MD: Let's go back to your beginnings as a drummer?

AS: My first musical inspiration was when my dad played me Sandy Nelson's "Let There be Drums." That is when I decided this is what I am going to do, and no one was going to tell me any different. Thanks to blind faith and good luck, I've managed to do this all of my life.

There are no musicians in my family, but my Mum and Dad were very supportive. A friend of the family would send me recordings of Shelly Manne, Art Blakey, Buddy Rich and all of these fantastic big band records and tapes. So I recognized their names and when their bands played near us, my dad would buy tickets and we would go and see them, I was lucky enough to meet Art Blakey and Buddy Rich in 1984. When I was 11, I played in a jazz trio with my music teacher from school, it was piano, bass, and drums. We would play at dinner-dances and PTA meetings and such. I learned at that age that jazz was cool, and that playing the drums was a viable thing to do. I didn't have any interest in anything else. My parents saw my passion in music and God bless them both, they nurtured it.

I began studying music and recording in Manchester at Salford, in 1989 I then attended a small school called Drumtech in London in 1991. I'm glad to say that we studied and listened to American jazz and groove drummers at Drumtech. I started my professional journey by moving to London when I was 21. This is in the pre-internet days, so the options were London, New York, Los Angeles, Nashville, or Chicago really. The internet has changed things. Today, if you are a drummer living in a small town in the south of Spain for instance, you can get seen and heard through social media. And if you are a great drummer, you can grab someone's attention, but in the 90s if you were keen to start a career in music you had to make

David Philips

David Philips

David Philips

the move to one of the music capitals. When I moved to London, my career was an empty canvas. I immediately tried to get some club and pub gigs in London. I've had some really lucky moments in my career, one of them was that I was really fortunate to have moved to a nice part of town and believe it or not I lived on the same street as Pino Palladino.

MD: That is lucky.

AS: I was coming back to my flat after a gig with a pint of milk, and I saw a bass player walking out of his house. I remember thinking, "Great, another musician lives on my street, that's wonderful." He proceeded to walk over and get into a brand new 7 Series BMW. I remember thinking, "Either this is not *really* a bass player, or he is a *VERY* good bass player." I saw his face and his height and realized it was Pino. He saw me looking and he came over to talk, and 30 + years later we are still very good friends. He was the most open and giving person that I have ever met, and he still is. I continually bent his ear and I showed up to his house with donuts almost every day, and I asked him hundreds of questions. I asked him about all of the drummers that he was working with. Jeff, Gadd, Vinnie, everybody. That was in 1991.

In 1993 I was playing in a pub and the bassist from Massive Attack came in. He hired the guitarist and myself for a singer-songwriter named Tom Robinson that was my first name gig and tour. Around that same time Pino called to tell me that there was a band called Del Amitri that was looking for a drummer, and he wanted to know if I would be up for it. I was 24 at the time, I jumped at the opportunity, and my life changed.

When I got to the audition Chris Whitten was already in the room playing, I asked someone who was playing drums, and when I learned it was Chris, I thought, "Well there's no way I'm getting this gig." Chris had already toured with McCartney and Dire Straits I thought it was game over for me. That was actually very fortunate, because I totally relaxed and figured, OK I'm here, I might as well go in and play and learn from the experience. I could go back to London with a bit more experience and knowledge, and hopefully get the next audition.

Knowing what I know now, you get gigs because of your playing, personality, and sometimes your price range. And my price range was considerably less than Chris Whitten at the time. Del Amitri was about to embark on a huge global tour, and (simply put) I think Chris was just too expensive. Chris had just finished up the Dire Straits tour and I don't think he was keen to do another slog of promo and another big tour. The next thing I knew I was on a plane headed to Los Angeles to start rehearsals for the Del Amitri tour.

We rehearsed in an old sparring gym of Muhammad Ali's, and the Red Hot Chilli Peppers were rehearsing next door. After rehearsals I sneaked into see Chad's kit and played it….. the next day he was on me and said have you been playing my drums?! I couldn't understand how he knew so I shamefully said yes and he shouted I knew it!!! He knew because he always puts his sticks on the floor tom when he finishes playing and I'd put them back on the snare!! I was caught! Anyway, my fifth gig with Del Amitri was Woodstock '94. I was literally dropped directly into the deep end, and that was the start of my professional journey.

MD: When you joined Del Amitri, did you have aspirations of becoming a session drummer, or were you just looking for a gig?

AS: Great point, I just wanted a gig, I wanted to play. One of the biggest things that I learned from Pino was that it was alright to like all kinds of music. He told me, "It's all music, and you are a musician." That might sound strange to US musicians, because in the US it is alright to like and play all kinds of music. But in the UK, it was a little different back then in the 90s. If you played groove music, jazz, or fusion you weren't accepted by some pop musicians and producers.

Recently Jeff Lorber made an observation to me, he said, "England is interesting, isn't it? If you can actually play your instrument, you aren't 'cool.'" And he's right in a way. There was a point in the 90s when Britpop was big and everything was about bands like Blur and Oasis, and not individual musicians. Becoming a session drummer wasn't all that possible. All of the attention was on bands, and band drumming. And I was very aware of that.

I just wanted a gig, I wanted to play. One of the biggest things that I learned from Pino was that it was alright to like all kinds of music. He told me, "It's all music, and you are a musician." That might sound strange to US musicians, because in the US it is alright to like and play all kinds of music.

MD: There is a very distinct tradition of British drumming that is interesting. I'm glad that you mentioned what Jeff Lorber said. But is that the British drumming tradition? Or is it something else?

AS: From what I am aware, all of the great American drummers I know have done some sort of drum line in their past and have a strong understanding of rudiments.

MD: Which could be a formal drum corps, a high school marching band, or some aspect of the military tradition of snare drumming.

AS: Yes. However, we don't have any of that in Britain really, so straight away that's different. My rudimental knowledge was almost non-existent. Most British drummers have a low bar for, and a low supply of, technique. But what isn't in low supply in the UK is bands and creating music. All of the British drummers who have become successful and influential I feel have looked at American drummers and said, "Wow look at that technique, listen to that feel." We have been inspired by American drummers. But (in general) we Brits didn't develop the technique. We tried to emulate the American drummers without having the technique to do it. Because of that lack of technique, everything just comes out sounding different. The same thing happened with the bands. British bands sometimes try to sound American, we sometimes get it wrong, and something else happens that is uniquely British and beautiful. For instance I think Barrimore Barlow (one time drummer for Jethro Tull) is a perfect example of that.

I should say that I have developed singles, doubles, paradiddles and a few things like that along the way. I just don't have the knowledge of that side of drumming. I am working on that. I love the new *Gaddiments* book! On the other hand, it's all just a way to express music.

MD: And like Pino told you, "It's all music."

AS: Yes, Pino was right. As a musician you can do a gig in Rio and contribute to a Brazilian pop session, or you can play with a Death Metal band in the Netherlands and contribute there as well. I loved jazz as a kid, and loved being in a band in the 90s, it was all just music. I always had aspirations to play all different kinds of music, and through Pino's confirmations, I learned that was OK. In fact, Pino is the perfect example of that, it wasn't that long ago when he was playing with The Who and D'Angelo at the same time.

MD: "It's just music" has always been one of my mantras, it's interesting that you said that. Did you realize or have the hopes that being in a band would help you get into the session world? I think that many young musicians see those two things as separate entities, but it's really not.

AS: Absolutely. Getting in a band was a good start. I absolutely knew that if I played the Del Amitri songs well on record, it would be a good starting point for my career, and for the things that I wanted to achieve in music.

MD: There is nothing as educational or helpful in a career as just playing every night, and when you are in a band, you are playing every night.

AS: You are so right. Before this tour with Tori Amos, I hadn't done a tour since I toured with Sinead O'Connor in 2012. To prepare for this tour I did a bit of running, and I played through imaginary sets of music, I practiced, I did all of the preparation that I could. But truthfully, the only way to get really prepared for a tour, is to tour and play every night. It takes about a week or so of shows to become "gig fit."

MD: Can I ask you about the session scene in the UK? There doesn't seem to be a whole lot of session drummers in the UK. I am aware of a few. Gavin Harrison just hipped me to Tony Beard, I have always loved the late Jimmy Copley, but who was around on the session scene when you were breaking in?

AS: The UK is incredibly small. There are only a handful of us who have managed to break into that scene and get a certain amount of work. Like in any city in the states, there are the same guys who get the movie soundtrack work, the record dates, the tours, and to break into that is very difficult. Ian Thomas is a Welsh drummer who is fantastic. He has toured with Clapton and Mark Knopfler. My first movie session was playing double drums with Ian on the Hans Zimmer/Lorne Balfe soundtrack for *Terminator Genisys*. Ian is such a warm hearted and gracious guy, and that's what he sounds like when he plays. I have a whole mantra about musicians, and "you are what you eat." When I met Gadd for the first time, he was so warm hearted and giving, and when you hear him play that is exactly how he sounds at the drums. Ian is the same way. I am actually lucky enough to sub for Ian with Hamish Stuart (from the Average White Band) occasionally.

Ralph Salmins is another really great drummer who has been essential in the UK session scene. He has a different attitude about playing the drums. Again, he is just such a warm and friendly bloke. He toured with Van Morrison for years, and he also toured with the Waterboys after me. He can swing, groove, read, everything! Karl Brazil is another one. He plays with Robbie Williams and sounds great doing big record dates and tours in the UK.

Us British drummers don't usually make a big impact on this side of the pond (in North America.) To just be known in the US, and that companies like Gretsch and Zildjian have recognized and championed me is so wonderful and such an honor. Vic Firth and I are actually working on a signature stick for future release, Gretsch is making my signature snare, and I'm even working on a book for Hudson Music. These are true schoolboy dreams for any British drummer. On this tour with Tori, the number of drummers that have either reached out or made a point to come out

If you sit and play along to Bob Marley records, it isn't going to do you or your playing any harm whatsoever! That in-between straight and swung groove will always help your playing.

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to a show has been amazing. Omar Hakim, Steve Ferrone, Stewart Copeland, David Garibaldi, Keith Carlock, Stanton Moore, and Mark Guiliana, these are my heroes. To make an impact here, and to earn the respect of American drummers, some of whom have become good friends, and to appear on the cover of *Modern Drummer*, I just can't describe what that feels like.

To find popularity as an independent British drummer is just so rare these days. My friend Gavin Harrison has made an impact in the US as an independent drummer. Then there is the club of "*if you can't beat them, join them*" of Dave Mattacks, Steve Ferrone, and Simon Phillips. They made the decision to actually move to the US.

MD: I am a big believer in career longevity, and all of the guys that you have mentioned have accomplished the ultimate goal of longevity, as have you, so you deserve to be in that group.

AS: I consider myself to be a 30-year overnight success.

MD: Now you are finding yourself working with younger artists. Have you found a difference in working with younger vs. older artists?

AS: Not really no. The younger artists and producers still require you to play with feel, passion, and deliver a vibe. It doesn't matter if it's Ed Sheeran or Rod Stewart, they both require the same musical potion and approach. I guess that's why some of the older musicians are still working, because it is still the same.

MD: It's all music.

AS: The drumset has been a modern instrument for only about 100 years, and today we are really delivering the same stuff that Ringo was in the 60s. When Ringo started playing a consistent backbeat in a song back then with the Beatles, it was a whole new thing, and we're still doing that today. Sound, feel, and personality on the drums still matters. People think that your personality isn't as important as it was with the nature of modern technology and ProTools, because everything (warts and all) can get ironed out. But when you are laying it down, people still want to look through the glass and say, that feels good! Even though they might edit and re arrange your performance after you are done, they still want it to feel good when you are recording a part.

MD: Have producers changed?

AS: I work with some older producers like Trevor Horn and Steve Lipson. I learn a lot from working with them. I really like working with Fraser T. Smith on Adele's music, Jimmy Napes on the Sam Smith music, and I love working with Mark Taylor on Cher's music. Although that is two distinct generations of producers, they all require the same thing. They want a good feel, they want the musical attitude to be correct. Obviously, there are new things going on: samples, sound replacement, loops, groove replacement, but when you are laying down tracks people still want it to feel good. That hasn't changed.

MD: Has Trevor ever told you why he likes working with you?

AS: He likes my jokes! He says I know when a joke is needed to keep the mood of a session up-beat, positive, and moving forward. But seriously, Trevor likes drummers that are consistent, drummers that use dynamics, and drummers that he can edit. At heart, Trevor is an arranger, so he'll move sections of music around within the song. The second half of your verse might turn into a bridge. But it isn't only a ProTools thing, he used to do that with tape too. Trevor really likes drummers whose parts he can edit and move around seamlessly. What it comes down to is that he likes old-school values from a musician.

MD: How did this tour with Tori Amos come about?
AS: I played on *The Voice* here in the UK for about seven years, and it was the perfect gig at the perfect time. My kids were young, it was a regular gig, and I was home all of the time. I started to think about the future, and wondered if I would still want to be doing *The Voice* television show when I was 60 years old? Those thoughts coincided with building my studio and starting to record tracks at home, and I started to get very busy. I left *The Voice* in 2019 and I was doing recordings with Alicia Keys and Ed Sheeran, and there were some bigger names that were starting to knock on my door, and I figured that I had to give it a go. I have continued chipping away at it, and here I am. I left *The Voice* to leave myself open for some more artistic ventures. When the pandemic hit, I was very fortunate to be one of the only guys in the UK that was set up to do drum tracks remotely, so that was fantastic and very lucky for me.

Last year Tori's management emailed me and asked if I would be interested in doing a tour. I knew that if I was going to go back on the road, it would have to be financially right, musically engaging, and it would have to be with an artist whom I could learn from and engage with musically. Tori ticked all of the boxes and more. The next day Keith Carlock emailed me asking me if I would be interested in touring with Tori as well. I think Keith put in a good word for me, and I got the gig. I'm very thankful for Keith's friendship and support.
MD: Matt Chamberlain has put a huge thumbprint on Tori's music, and she has allowed him to leave a thumbprint on her music. How did you deal with that aspect of the gig?
AS: Obviously, those are enormous shoes to try to fill. Matt is so stylistically perfect for the gig, and he has such a brilliant voice on the drums, so yes it was pretty daunting. But the fantastic thing is that Tori was (and is) open to my interpretations of her music. Obviously, there are certain grooves and parts that can't be changed, and I wouldn't dare change them. For example, Matt's groove on "Sweet Sangria" is part of the DNA of that tune, that is classic Matt Chamberlain, so I do my best to "be" Matt on that tune. But I can only go so far. Ultimately, and going back to the talk about British drumming, I sound like me playing Matt Chamberlain.
MD: That has nothing to do with being British, that has to do with being human. You can only be you.
AS: But there is a certain swampy American groove that Keith Carlock, Stanton Moore, and Matt Chamberlain all have. It's an ingrained American gumbo of groove. We don't have that in England, we have to immerse ourselves in it, and (try) to learn it.

Tori is American but lives in England, so I guess that has worked in my favor, and her bassist Jon Evans has been an absolute sweetheart to work with. He has done the gig for 25 years with Matt, and has never done the gig with anyone else, and he has been so giving and understanding, I call him Obi Wan because he's helped me like a Jedi master. It has been a fantastic learning experience because we do a new tune every day, so I get to listen to and learn from Matt

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Chamberlain every day. Although Matt and I have shared some records together, we have never met, but I am having fun learning from him and putting my own spin on the songs, and I hope we'll get a chance to meet soon.

MD: I don't even know where I would start to find the entranceway into Tori's music without trying to sound like Matt. How did you approach that challenge?

AS: The first thing was that I changed my drumset. I am known for using a small Ringo or Charlie Watts type of set. But in my studio, I have a couple of sets, one has a drier bass drum, one is wide open. Tori's husband mixes front of house on the tour, so he is very dialed in to sound. So I created a bigger set that covered all of the sounds that Matt used, and tried to cover all of the stylistic bases for Tori's wide variety of recordings. Sonically, my drums can get close to the sounds Matt created. Feel-wise it will never be identical.

MD: What tunes do you enjoy playing the most?

AS: I like "Cornflake Girl," which I don't think was recorded by Matt. It swings, and I made the brazen decision to play a halftime shuffle on it and it works, it's sort of swampy, so that's a highlight. I like to play "Pancake" and the song "God". She has some fantastic big cinematic songs that I play shakers and atmospheric stuff on which are a lot of fun.

MD: What is working with Hans Zimmer like? That is the film equivalent of playing with the Beatles.

AS: I adore Hans, and almost everyone who works with him adores him. I did *Terminator Genisys* with Lorne Balfe, and that led to *Kung Fu Panda* with Lorne but Hans was there too. That led to me working with Hans on *The Lion King* and *Boss Baby 2*. I just worked with Hans and Steve Lipson at British Grove Studios (Mark Knopfler's Studio.) One of the first things that I noticed about Hans was that he treated everyone as an equal. The guy who brought Hans his tea was treated equally to a musician. With Hans there is no pecking order, everyone is an equal. The kid who is operating the ProTools rig, is as important as the 6'4" legend who is playing fretless bass.

MD: That is refreshing to hear.

AS: Because of that, it seems anyone will do anything for Hans. He has an amazing talent for making creatives feel that they are special, and because of that he gets amazing results from them. Fortunately, that seems to be becoming the norm with the producers that I work with. Steve Lipson, Mark Taylor, and Fraser T. Smith are the same way.

MD: When you are doing remote sessions how much communication do you have with the artist and the producer?

AS: It varies. When I did the Seal record, he Facetimed me. When I work with Trevor Horn he and I communicate regularly. He is very good at referencing different grooves and such. Remote is a slower process but we always get there. Before the pandemic I still did a good deal of sessions in London where the entire rhythm section was in the same room at the same time, and I look forward to getting back to that. That world still exists. But there are a lot of younger producers who are coming from a different world. The fact is, that is how mainstream pop music is made, like it or not. You have to move with the times.

MD: You have done a lot of records, what ones would you point to as being ones to check out?

AS: I love working with producer Mark Taylor on the Cher records, and the single "I Hope You Find It" is a track that offers a good example of my straight pop playing. Adele's "Set Fire to the Rain" is another track that everyone talks about. James Morrison's *You're Stronger Than You Know* is good and I'm on the whole record, Billy Idol's *Kings & Queens of the Underground* is me rockin' a little harder. Back in 2001 I did a record with producer Ross Robinson who produced Korn, Slipknot, and Limp Bizkit. The band was called Vex Red and the record was called *Start with a Strong and Persistent Desire*. No one would even think that is me playing, but it's a really good example of me playing hard rock and metal. Ross Garfield provided the drums for that record, and he brought a beautiful Gretsch kit and the famous Tama Bell Brass snare that Dave Grohl used on *Nevermind*, and it was amazing. That record with Vex Red is a great example of my playing. The drum sound is fantastic, we recorded to tape, I just love that record. I also really like the Seal records *Seven* and *Soul 2* and the Rod Stewart record that I did with Trevor producing. The new Julian Lennon record that I did just came out and it turned out great. And believe it or not I am doing a Bob Marley album right now.

MD: *WHAT???* A "new" Bob Marley record?

AS: They are adding strings to some of the old Marley records, and the Marley family is fully supporting the project partly because it is an ethnically diverse orchestra and it's really being done right! Believe it or not, I had to replace the Carlton Barrett drum tracks to make the re-recording possible.

MS: That sounds like sacrelige.

AS: I know, unfathomable right? When they approached me, I said exactly that, that's sacrelige, you can't change Carlton Barrett's drum parts!

MD: They are so slinky, and there is so much feel there.

AS: I know, but when they sent me the tracks, I knew why they wanted to do it. The tracks are labeled kick and snare. It sounds like a 57 in the bass drum, and a 57 as an overhead, and that was it. Everything leaked into those two mics. They wanted to remix the tracks and they needed new drum tracks that were properly recorded to widen the drum sound. When I heard the tracks, I began to understand the need. That meant I had to go through the tracks and learn Carlton's parts and play exactly what he played.

MD: And more importantly *HOW* he played.

There was a four-year period when I barely even played the drums, I just recorded, listened, and learned in my studio. After 10 years of work, my engineering skills have gotten to a good place. I did a Seal record, and a Rod Stewart track with Trevor Horn and he liked the final drum tracks, I knew that I was doing something right.

AS: I adore reggae music, and I cherish Carlton's playing, so this was an opportunity to learn from Carlton.
MD: That is a wonderful opportunity to put a legendary drummer under the microscope and really hear what was happening, so tell me what you learned?
AS: There were some tracks where he would stick to a part for 8, 10, or 12 bars before he played a fill or did something different. He was just grooving! Then there are other tunes where he is playfully interacting with the rhythm guitar, the bass, and what Bob was singing. In those tunes he was changing what he played every two bars or so. He was literally changing the groove by adding a little extra hi hat or bass drum every two bars or so. It was fascinating how he approached different songs.
MD: Was it your job to play exactly what he played?
AS: Yes.

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MD: Did you transcribe the parts?
AS: No, I did it on ProTools 4, 8, 12 or 16 bars at a time. There were a few tunes that I could remember an entire verse or chorus, but most of it was done 4 or 8 bars at a time. I would have 8 bar run-ups, and then drop in 8 bars, and have to do the same thing for the next 8 bars because what he was playing was so complex and crazy.

Originally, they were going to layer my playing on top of Carlton's to just get a better sound, and they might have actually done that on a few tracks. It was just a drum sound and sonic control thing. But when they heard a few of those tracks they figured that my parts were good enough to stand on their own. The producer (Nick Patrick) says I am actually credited as playing with Bob Marley on the recording, which is just insanity to me!

At first, I wasn't sure if I should even do the project, I knew I could get a bit of flack for it. But then I just viewed it as a job for me as a musician, I relished the challenge, but I adore that music. In the end I figured that if I didn't do it, someone else could come along and possibly really mess it up, so at least I knew that I was going to approach it with the utmost respect.

I know I am a white guy from England playing reggae music, but I really wanted to do this project correctly! So for advice I called a bass player friend named Winston Blissett, who is actually the bassist from Massive Attack that I mentioned earlier, because he and I used to play reggae music all of the time.
MD: What else did you learn from your microscopic reggae education from the master?
AS: The biggest misconception about reggae is that it is laid back, which isn't true, that's a big misconception. There are a handful of signature fills which are actually very similar that you have to learn. And the discussion about how there should never be a crash on one is rubbish.

It's great feel music, and one thing is for sure, If you sit and play along to Bob Marley records, it isn't going to do you or your playing any harm whatsoever! That in-between straight and swung groove will always help your playing, and it's in the Marley music in bucketloads! Some of Carlton's fills will make you laugh out loud, because you are left wondering, how did *THAT* work? You can't transcribe it. I just love the music, and that's really all you can do.
MD: Again, like Pino said, "It's all music."
AS: To be the same drummer that played on that Vex Red record in 2001 and to play on this Bob Marley record today is just so exciting for me. I really enjoy the fact that they are so completely different, and yet they are both my drumming style and approach.
MD: I know you are a bit of a drum geek, so let's drum geek out a bit about gear. The set that you are using with Tori is beautiful and it sounds great. What are you using up there?
AS: Let's start with the snares. Gretsch knew that I had a longtime love of Purpleheart wood, and they made me a prototype several years ago.
MD: What is it about Purpleheart?
AS: Purpleheart has some great low end, but here's the whole story… In the 80s and 90s Brady drums was making Stave drums out of Jarrah. I think Steve Jordan was playing a 7x12 Jarrah Brady on the David Sanborn record called *Upfront* and on the Keith Richards record *Main Offender*. I loved those records, and Steve has such a great sound. Unfortunately, I could never afford one of those drums, they were just too expensive. There was a British drum manufacturer that made block style shelled drums that were similar to Brady's at a quarter of the price. They made me a 7x12 block Purpleheart drum. It's a drum I used a lot. If you detune it a bit and dampen it a little, it sounds like a medium tuned 14" drum, but with something "extra." I used that drum early on with the bands Faithless and MJ Cole. Producers would ask for the drum I played on the Paul Jackson Jr album, and Paul asked for that sound too. At that same time I was using a detuned sound on pop records because of how the frequency of the drum sits below the vocals. It occupies a nice sonic position in a track that is above the bass drum but below the vocals. A snare drum that is tuned higher can interfere with the vocals,

but a detuned drum just sits perfectly within the mix. I used the Purpleheart again with Jeff Lorber. Vinnie Colaiuta and Gary Novak were also on that record, but that drum along with the detuned sound, definitely became part of my sound, and I fell in love with it.

Gretsch made me a 7x12 Purpleheart ply drum without my even asking. When I got the drum, I loved it. It's different from the block sound, which is very compressed and short. My signature 7x12 Purpleheart ply drum has even more bottom end and more sustain than the original block drum, and I just love it! With Tori, I am using that drum as my main snare and it sounds fabulous. I used that drum with guitarist Ariel Posen and Cory Wong on the track called "Spare Tire" and it is perfect.

MD: What is the rest of the kit with Tori?

AS: Gretsch built me a replica of my Broadkaster studio kit in Black Satin Flame that is a 10" rack tom, 13" and 16" floor toms, a 14x22 main kick and a 16x20 second kick. The second kick is tuned wide open with no hole in the front head and no muffling. The snare on my left is my 1950s 4x14 Max Roach signature snare tuned down and swampy. Lucas Gretsch has nicknamed that drum "Phat Max."

MD: I just had this conversation with Peter Erskine, but aren't 4" and 4.5" snares the greatest?

AS: Here is the great things about drum magazines. I remember reading an old interview with JR Robinson when he talked about Rufus and Chaka Khan, and he mentioned 4" drums being really fat. I remember thinking that was interesting. If you detune a deep drum, you miss the midrange and the high end. But if you detune a 4" drum a bit you get the low end and a very nice high end as well. It's actually very close to the original Linn drum snare sound. The 4" Max Roach drums are the best ones that I have found.

MD: You are preaching to the choir, I have several 4" and 4.5" snares. OK, we have entered the snare drum world, what other snares do you love?

AS: I have a beautiful Joe Montineri snare 4x14 in Copper glitter, I have quite a few vintage round badge Gretsch's that are the greatest hip hop snares when they're cranked up. I have a 1970's COB 4160, a 1969 Acrolite which I love, a 1976 6.5 Supraphonic which is a very versatile drum. I have a Yamaha Maple Absolute that has been on tons of sessions (including the Adele sessions) so that drum isn't going anywhere. Sugar Percussion made me a drum too. There are some brilliant custom drum makers out there.

MD: Do you have any 15's?

AS: I also have a 4x15 snare made by Gary Noonan, again because JR used to use 15's. I'm not a "collector," I have never gone out of my way to pursue a specific drum. I've been playing drums for over 40 years, and if you are into gear (like many of us are,) you will accumulate a decent amount of good sounding drums (or cymbals) that you acquire over the years, just because they sound good.

MD: I said those exact words to someone yesterday.

AS: I have 10 or 12 drum kits and 50 or so snares, and I am nowhere near someone like Matt Chamberlain who I am told has hundreds of sets and snares.

MD: So what about sets?

AS: I have four Broadkaster sets, a 1963 Round Badge Gretsch, 1965 Maple Classic Ludwig, and a Yamaha Club Custom and a few other Yamaha's from my time with them. I still have a Sakae Trilogy kit from my short time with them. Unfortunately, I don't have my original Premier kit. That was 1980s single headed Olympic kit that sounded great.

MD: You are talking to a Gretsch guy, I have a completely tweaked Gretsch Black Nitron shell pack in all the sizes. We are all familiar with "*That Great Gretsch Sound*" What do you think is the "thing" with Gretsch's, why do they sound so great?

AS: I have had my 1963 Round Badge's in 20, 12, 16 since I was 23 years old, and I have used them on a lot of records. Enrique Iglesias, Cher, all five James Morrison records I played on, and many more. Although I've had relationships with other manufacturers, and no matter what other kits I was playing live, that kit has made most of the records.

When I was with Yamaha, and they changed their factory and Hagi left, us European drummers weren't made aware of the change, and we felt left in the dark. So I went with Sakae, they were making a Maple Poplar Maple shell and I love that sound from my years of playing Gretsch. When Sakae folded, it coincided with DW buying Gretsch, and making the Maple Poplar Maple Broadkasters again. When I heard that I was sold, that's why I am finally with Gretsch, and Gretsch is at the forefront of the drum world yet again. I adore my new Broadkaster kits and my DW hardware and pedals.

MD: Are you as much of a cymbal nut as you are a drum nut?

AS: I have always played Zildjian, I had a few Paiste's when I was a kid because of Stewart Copeland, Jeff, and Bonham. But Zildjian became part of my sound. I have old K's, old A's, and lots of new Zildjians. I have a set of 1969 14" A hats that I have used on an endless number of sessions. There is a guy at Zildjian who says they're the best sounding hi hats in the world. The new set of 14's that I have with Tori are as close as you can get to the old ones. I love the new FX Raw Crashes that Zildjian is making. I have a 1987 K ride that is beautiful. I have Kerope's and Constantinolple's, I mix and match everything. I have a lot of cymbals lying around in my studio.

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I can go from vintage sounds to modern sounds to extra dry sounds and everything in between.

MD: What are the cymbals on stage with Tori?

AS: The hats are the 14" new vintage A New Beats, a 6" A Splash and a 10" Sweet K Splash, a Custom Dry 10" Splash, and 18" Kerope. My main ride is a 22" Overhammered Constantinople that I occasionally swap out for a 22" Medium Low, to my right I have a 20" Staccato Ride that is a great crash or ride.

MD: I know you must have a lot of little toys and sounds that you are using to cop Matt's approach, is there anything that you would like to mention?

AS: When I was in New York, I went to a shop called the Music Inn, the place is straight out of Harry Potter. In the basement they have

tons of old stuff, and I bought a bunch of shakers and bells etc. I am attaching them to my drums and cymbals. They create great textures. I learned this from Mark Gulianna.

MD: What is the strangest thing that you have ever done to a drum or a cymbal to get a certain sound?

AS: What a great question! I tape cymbals and drums but that's not strange. People see me using tape on drums and cymbals and some complain. But if Trevor Horn asks me to dampen or tape up a drum or a cymbal, I'll put a *dead cat* on it if needed to make him happy. I will do anything to get the sound that people want. I have strapped a tambourine to the front head of my 20" bass drum which I have never seen someone do, so that's pretty strange (I guess.)

MD: Let's talk about your studio, what is some of your favorite recording gear?

AS: I created my studio 10 years ago to store my gear and maybe do a bit of practicing. I had no aspirations of it becoming a recording studio really. After I did that, a producer friend of mine asked me what the room sounded like. I had no idea. He told me to put a mic up and record into Garage Band. He listened to the file and said the room sounded good, why don't you set it up to record?

There are two ways to do that. One way is to slowly buy some mics, an interface, and so on, and build it up slowly. The other way is to jump in with both feet, invest a serious sum of money into speakers, ProTools, interfaces, mics, stands, cables, and spend some time learning ProTools. That's what I did. At the time, the only thing I knew about was microphones. Like all drummers who do sessions, you see the same microphones every day and on most sessions. In the UK you see Coles ribbon mics on almost every session. Now you see them all over the globe. I must admit that I have had a lot of help from my producer friends along the way. There was a four-year period when I barely even played the drums, I just recorded, listened, and learned in my studio. After 10 years of work, my engineering skills have gotten to a good place. I did a Seal record, and a Rod Stewart track with Trevor Horn and he liked the final drum tracks, I knew that I was doing something right, and I have built and grown from there.

I use Universal Audio interfaces, I have some Neve stuff and Neuman stuff as well. I do have some old outboard gear like old compressors and a Roland Space Echo. I keep my Broadcasters always mic'd up in a modern way at the studio, and I also have my old Ludwig's mic'd up at all times with a really old school approach. I like an original D19 hanging above the kit and a U47 on the bass drum.

MD: How does the recording process help someone hone their craft as a drummer?

AS: Great question! When you record yourself, and listen back, and re-record and listen back, and edit your part in your mind for the next take, you develop a consistency. The process of recording and going into the control room and listening back countless times is how so many of our heroes like Steve Gadd or Jeff Porcaro (for instance) have developed their professional consistency. That means the way you play your hi hats, the way you play your bass drum, making your drumset sounds like a single instrument, and playing consistent back beats. Making sure your hi hat and snare drum drop at the same time is a big part of it too. That might sound very basic, but making sure everything lines up is hugely important, it creates a much better sound and performance on the drums.

MD: When you are recording in your studio, and you play a first take, what are you listening to when you listen back?

AS: The good thing about remote recording is that I get much more time to listen to a song beforehand and to listen to each take than I do on a traditional recording session. I usually get a final take in five or less passes. There are the occasional mythical one take wonders, but I think those are largely a myth. If I am recording a complete song, I will figure out what fills work within the first few takes, but I still try to do complete takes. I can drop in anything, which is fine. But I still try to get complete takes.

MD: What is the percentage of recording work that you are doing in your studio vs. recording away from home in bigger commercial studios?

AS: Since the pandemic, it's about 100% in my home studio. When I get home, I am starting a new Cher record in my studio. Drum sessions can be an expensive endeavor in a big studio, and recording budgets have gotten smaller, and unfortunately a lot of the bigger studios have closed. Therefore, drummers like me, Aaron Sterling, and others have come along and offered our services by way of our home studios. There are downsides. I can't interact with the producer or the artist like I would if we were all together on a studio session. And I am stuck with the sounds that are on the tracks that they send, I can't really change them, which can get a bit annoying sometimes. But I love the process and the experimentation of recording.

The good thing about remote recording is that I get much more time to listen to a song beforehand and to listen to each take than I do on a traditional recording session.

MD: When you are recording tracks, how do you know when a drum track is done?

AS: Most times the producer will let you know when they are happy. If you can stand back and listen to a track with the greater musical purpose in mind, you can tell when you have gotten to a good place with the song. The good thing about working remotely is that I can completely immerse myself in a track. I can make sure the sound and the feel are perfect before I send the producer the final track.

MD: You have mentioned some great Steve Jordan recordings already, what are some of your other favorite records?

AS: I am a Stewart Copeland nut and through Trevor we have become friends. Stewart is on my EP, so I love *any* Police records. But I must say, Stewart is a comet of a person, he is a character and has enough energy to run a small country. It no surprise that when he plays the drums, "hey presto" (!) that's how he sounds, and I love him for that.

Mark Gulianna is a real character too, Americans would call him "kooky," and that could possibly apply to how he plays the drums. He is inquisitive and exploring as a person and as a musician. And he has a great sense of humour. That all comes across in his playing.

The first Chaka Khan record with Steve Ferrone is one of my favorite records ever. Steve immersed himself in American groove drumming, and he is a beaming light of groove. He is a reliable, dependable bloke, and (of course) that's how he sounds. The later Average White band records are amazing, and I love his playing with Tom Petty. I really liked his playing with Clapton too. Steve and I have become friends too via Hamish Stuart and Trevor Horn. We shared the drum chair on a Rod Stewart album.

Speaking of Clapton, I have been a Clapton fan for a long time. I

have seen him with Andy Newmark, Ferrone, Gadd, Steve Jordan. But I also saw Richie Hayward with Clapton, I think he did three shows with Eric, and it was amazing. You would imagine that would be a match made in heaven, but I actually think that Richie was (possibly) even *too greasy* for Eric. I wish we heard more about Richie because his playing really touches me. The way Richie sat between swing and straight. The way that he plays Little Feat's "Long Distance Love" gets me every time.

MD: Again, you are preaching to the choir, he is one of my favorite drummers ever.

AS: Of course, everything that Purdie does is constantly on my radar, especially the Aretha stuff. I adore Keith Moon, Ringo and Charlie Watts too. Of course, Jeff Porcaro, I remember hearing "Rosanna" for the first time when I was 13, and no one I knew in England could explain what he was playing.

MD: Speaking of Richie and half-time shuffles, check out "Cadillac Hotel," (especially the live version) it's one of the best half-time shuffles EVER! What are some of your favorite Gadd recordings other than the obvious Chick Corea and Paul Simon recordings?

AS: There are a few Bob James records that he is on that I love, and that Freddie Hubbard *Windjammer* record that he split with Andy Newmark. Of course, I love his Ricky Lee Jones stuff too. He sounds great on some of the Clapton stuff, and I love the Kate Bush record *Fifty Words for Snow*. Steve and I talked recently on the phone, and I hope to see him soon in London.

I have to mention Andy Newmark again. He is originally from Bermuda, and after he and Clapton parted ways, Andy went back to Bermuda and ran a club. When I was playing with Squeeze in 1998, we played at his club for a week, and it turned out that he had worked with Squeeze too. When he moved back to the UK, he started doing *The Lion King*, and he wanted me to be his sub, but I had to turn him down because my reading just wasn't good enough. Later on, he recommended me for a Marianne Faithful tour. I love his playing on John and Yoko's *Double Fantasy*, Sly and the Family Stone's *Fresh*, Roxy Music's *Avalon*. There is a Bob James record that Andy and Gadd did. It's hard to tell them apart at times.

Manu Katche' is a big influence, and I think everything that he has played on is magical. The fluidity of Omar Hakim changed my whole life. Omar came to see me play with Tori in Brooklyn recently. Keith Carlock has been a fantastic support too. I can't not mention David Garibaldi who is a constant. David has been so incredibly supportive of me, we have become good friends. The original drummer from Level 42 Phil Gould is a dear friend of mine too, he was a major influence and I love his playing. People forget that (like Neil Peart for Rush,) Phil wrote the lyrics for Level 42 songs. Then there's otherworldly talents of Gary Husband. Henry Spinetti who played a little while with Clapton is fantastic, and I love Dave Mattacks' work with Fairport Convention. He did a great record with Joan Armatrading too.

MD: Let's conclude by talking about social media a bit. I must admit, because of your recent high exposure on social media I thought that you were much younger.

AS: You're not the first to think that. The truth is that a drummer in his 50s really shouldn't be messing around on social media platforms that are primarily for teenagers. I have been on Instagram for 10 years, I started posting there to document the creation of my studio 10 years ago. I think my popularity there might have grown because I was one of the first guys to make my Instagram recordings with a professional recording setup, instead of just an iphone. But I enjoy the (mainly) positive exchange of ideas and opinions on Instagram and now even TikTok. If I can draw someone's attention to Richie Hayward, Steve Ferrone, Barrimore Barlow, or Andy Newmark etc on social media (or in *Modern Drummer,*) and open the door to a whole new world of drumming for younger drummers, I will. I feel like that is part of my responsibility as a musician.

MD: Doesn't the negative aspect of social media ever get to you?

AS: I spent seven years playing on *The Voice*, there is a lot of pressure playing on TV, it's a pressure cooker. I have played in front of most of my drumming heroes, and with some of my musical heroes. If I post something on social media and someone doesn't like it, that's fine. People can be judgmental, everybody has an opinion, that's fine. When I play in any context, I am going to give everything I can. That is me being me. If someone doesn't like that, that's a shame, but I'm still going to do it. I try to look at the positive side of any criticism that I get, but when Hans Zimmer or Abe Laboriel or Stewart Copeland or Omar Hakim likes what I am doing that's really all that matters. If some guy in his bedroom chooses to be negative, that really doesn't bother me because the people that I love and respect the most seem to like what I'm doing.

I have about a quarter of a million followers on Instagram, 100,000 on Facebook, and now (hilariously) 40,000 on TikTok. When I post on social media, I post about things that I like, things that I am interested in, and things that I find interesting. People ask me who my "social media manager" is, and I just laugh. That's hilarious! I post about things that I honestly and sincerely care about, and that's it.

MD: It's amazing how that works, honesty and sincerity… What a concept.

Check out Ash's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

Tim Northup:
The Northup Drum Museum, Come on in and Play!

By Mark Griffith

During my years of touring, I have been to just about every musical museum in the world, and I know (and respect) people who collect things. But the one thing I have never liked about either, is the tendency to keep museum items and collections behind a glass shield or a velvet rope, and for collectors to discourage or not allow people to use and interact with their collections. The Northup Drum Museum is NOT that type of museum, and Tim Northup is not that type of collector. Let's face it, drums are created to be played with sticks and brushes, they aren't fragile. For those of us who feel a little deeper about such things, we might say that drums have "souls" and their reason for existence is to be played and to make a joyful noise. Personally, when I see an old instrument, I want to hear it and I want to play it. I want to hear its personality. Lucky to say, I was in the right place, and Tim Northup agrees.

Tim Northup is not your typical drum collector, and this is NOT your typical museum. The vintage sticks and brushes that sit on every drumset he displays, are not just there for show. Tim encourages everyone to sit down and play every instrument at the Northup Drum Museum. In a typical museum, if something is in a glass case, it's for display purposes only, but not here! Tim is actually eager to pull any of his drums off of the shelf for any musician to play and explore. His 30 (or so) drum sets sit in a wide open (and fantastic sounding) showroom in Oneonta, New York just waiting to be played by the next visitor. His museum is a very special place that every drummer young and old, beginner or professional, unknown or legendary, should visit.

Tim Northup started as a drummer, he was a music industry minor and an art history major in college at the State College of New York in Oneonta, and now he is a drummer, museum curator, instrument collector, and an antique and art dealer. His knowledge of the antique and art world is captivating. However, somewhere during his journey of buying and selling antiques and art, his life as a musician and an antique dealer happily intersected.

Tim was always intrigued by the old hand painted drumheads of the early 1900s and saw many in his travels. He bought these unique pieces of American art. But after a while he began to look behind the glowing bass drum heads that excited him. Behind those heads were the drums of the 1920s and 30s, and they really began to speak to him.

20 years ago, his love for the unique instruments of musical days gone by compelled him to start buying and restoring old drums. After all, when he bought those beautiful drum heads, he got the drums too. After 10 years of learning about and restoring drums, Tim had a chance encounter with a giant vintage drum collection that was for sale, and he jumped in. He couldn't resist their beauty, allure, and place within American History. That's where I began my fascinating day at the happiest place on earth (*sorry Disneyland!*)

MD: How did this whole collection and museum begin?
TN: I always loved the look of the old hand-painted drumheads from an artistic perspective. I am an antiques and art dealer, restoration specialist, but I also design and create lighting. When I found those heads, I enjoyed restoring the lighting that went inside the bass drums and really made the drumsets come to life.

The story behind hand-painted drumheads is fascinating. From about 1925 until 1940 you could order your drumsets to come with a hand painted bass drum head. It was an additional 10 to 15 dollars when you ordered a new set from Ludwig, Leedy, or Slingerland. The early Ludwig painted heads cracked because (as we all know) calfskin moves with the weather. Humidity made them slunk, and dryness made them expand. Early on, the Ludwig painters used long brush strokes and their paintings would eventually crack. The drumhead painters had to learn to Stipple Paint like French artist George Seurat. When you Stipple Paint, you are dotting the head (or canvas) with dots of paint instead of brush strokes. The painters at Leedy got really good at Stipple painting, so the hand painted Leedy heads tend to survive the best. I actually have an old picture of an artist at the Leedy factory Stipple Painting with a stack of bass drum heads next to him.
MD: Was it almost an impressionistic way of painting?
TN: Yes it was an impressionistic way of painting to create a realistic image. When you ordered your set, you could pick the scene that you wanted on your head. The popular scenes were a Dutch windmill, a boat in a lake, mountain scenes and landscapes, log cabins in the woods, and Moose and different animals. Later, there were also art-deco style heads with nude dancers, butterfly girls, and the spider web girl patterns

However, as soon as Gene Krupa came along, he stripped away all of the gadgets from the drumsets, and he started using his monogrammed shield on his front bass drum head. The tradition

1920s Ludwig Tango trap set with a version of Moonlight Silhouette head, nickel over brass snare drum, Charleston pedal.

1920s Ludwig Niagara Falls trap set with pioneer nickel snare drum, China tom, and lowboy.

of hand painted bass drum heads was over. But there was a good 15-year period when there were a lot of hand painted drums heads being made.

MD: So when did this love of hand painted drum heads, and minor obsession with 1920s drums become a museum? How do you find and acquire most of your items.

TN: I like to buy collections. I started a Facebook group based around 1920s drums, painted heads, and sound effects. I invited a few friends that I had made in the collector's world, and we are now over 2,000 members strong. It is one of the of the most active drum groups on Facebook. I have established some very good friends along the way, who are also some of the sources for finding rare and vintage items for the museum. Joe Barthlette from Wood and Weather Drum Shop is a good friend, as is Richard King who is the "hardware guy" for vintage drums, have both found some of my rarest items for me. Drum shows, online auctions, and developing relationships with good drum dealers is the best way to find vintage drums.

MD: I know it's not about the number of sets that you have, but how many sets and snares do you have here?

TN: I haven't counted recently, I think there are 30 or so sets, over 100 snares, and maybe 200 Zildjian cymbals? I have bought most of what I have in the last 20 years, when I do something, I go all out. I have tried to seek out the rarest examples, and the finest examples that I can afford.

MD: That is the great thing about this place, who wants to look at an old slide-whistle, or train effect box. Those instruments, and the drums are meant to be heard and played!

TN: I already had four or five 1920s sets, and I loved all of the musical gadgets, traps, and sound effects that accompanied those sets: the temple blocks, the ratchets, the whistles, etc. However, after I bought a huge collection of drums, I moved everything into my antique gallery. Soon there just wasn't enough room for the antiques, so I moved the antiques to the second floor of my gallery and the main floor became a drum showroom for my collection. The building that houses this magnificent collection is actually my grandparent's restored 1800's dairy barn, the farmhouse and barn have been in the family for 80 years.

I had a chance encounter with Steve Smith and I happened to tell him about my collection and he wanted to see all of the drums. I organized and displayed everything that I had because Steve was coming to the showroom. While he was here, he played everything, and we started a nice friendship. When he was leaving, he signed a drumhead for me, and wrote that I had a "*great museum!*" I hadn't ever considered that I had a museum worth of old drums and percussion instruments, but he was right! I started to display everything with a more museum approach and created some educational background leaflets about each kit, I changed the name of my FaceBook page, and people started to come to visit. When people started to visit, I encouraged everyone to play the drums and everything that is here. Everything here is tuned and ready to play, most of the drums have period correct calf heads, and everything is ready to go.

I actually had Pete Jarvis and the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble here a while back and they did a recording here using eight different snare drums and a lot of the other instruments that I have. Pete is a musical genius. He actually wrote some pieces of music just for the instruments at the museum. They actually turned the museum into a recording studio (because it sounds so good in here) and they did a record right here. When I have college and high school music students come through, they have never seen of any of these old instruments, let alone actually heard them. So young drummers can get a real education here too.

Tim and Steve Smith at the museum on his very first visit.

MD: I am happily surprised by the fact that you encourage everyone to play the drums in the museum. That's what makes you different. Who has been here to see and play your drums?

TN: Arthur Vint from Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks came up and played everything, we had a great time. Michael Windish, drummer for Chubby Checker, Professional jazz drummer Bob Meyer and Alan "Sticky" Wickett from London and I have done some videos together on sound effects, and he loves the museum. And of course Steve Smith has been in a few times and he loves to come and actually play in the style of the vintage drums. Steve has filmed several videos here at the museum playing these vintage drum sets. Playing in the style of the 1920s and 30s isn't as simple as it seems. You were really playing in that style when you were playing my sets.

MD: How can you not? Playing these drums is fascinating because you hardly have to hit them, they just sing. You don't have to play hard, and you don't have to pull the sound out of them. They respond to the lightest touch.

I've always been intrigued by the parallels between the drumset and American history. While people have come from around the world to create the melting pot of the United States of America, different instruments have come from around the world to create the drumset. While each separate component of the drumset originated elsewhere, the set of drums was assembled here in roughly 1890.

The drumset is believed to be first played by New Orleans drummer Dee Dee Chandler. The drumset is the only instrument created in the US. In my opinion, the drumset IS the United States. By visiting the museum, you can see the evolution of the entire drumset. You can see how it was put together piece by piece

Display case of vintage traps, sound effects, whistles, ratchets, temple blocks, wood blocks, cowbells, and a collection of vintage bass drum pedals.

starting in around 1890 and progressing through the modern drumsets of today. You even have an actual drum from the Civil War that would pre-date the drumset, and a few other significant drums that correspond to US history too.

TN: A customer brought me an attic find drum because she knew I was also a drummer. It is from the Pittsfield Militia and made by the Stevens Drum Company in 1840. It even has the original sticks. You can tell it is a Civil War drum because the owner signed and dated the inside September 1, 1862. That is the actual date that Pittsfield Massachusetts mustered out a militia for a battle in Virginia and North Carolina. That means this drum actually saw battle in the Civil War. The next owner was a military drummer named Corey Thornton who signed and dated the inside of the drum in 1898.

The P.G. Lowery Band played in the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus and earlier in the Minstrel shows. Those are important facets of US entertainment. I have his drum here, it is a Leedy 15" 16 lug snare drum. Inside the case was the Ringling Brothers itinerary from 1929. That is a significant drum in drum history and US history.

MD: People forget about the importance of the drumming gigs with the circus. I know that Papa Jo Jones played with Ringling Brothers, and there were others.

1951 Slingerland Radio King set with original calf heads! Tim calls this his Gene Krupa style kit.

1968 Slingerland Buddy Rich model kit, original BR music stand, Radio King snare drums, painted head trap kits.

View from "the driver's seat" on a vintage 1936 Leedy trap set, Ludwig Mountain & Lake scene trap set, Leedy Ship Silhouette, early W&A trap set.

TN: My museum is based around American drums, a great deal of what I have comes from the time period between 1927 to 1939. What I have started to do is get the old Ludwig, Slingerland, Leedy, and Gretsch catalogs and recreate the pages from the catalog into real life sets. I really enjoy what I call my "*Come to Life Catalog Kits.*" I go to painstaking lengths to recreate and set up the EXACT kits that were pictured in the old catalogs.

I even have a few time-capsule kits that I have bought from drummers' families. I really enjoy getting the old pictures of the original owners playing their kits and having everything set up exactly as the original owner played it 100 years ago. I have a kit like that from a drummer named Bill Boswell from Pennsylvania, he used that kit to open for Artie Shaw in the 1940s.

MD: You have some really rare stuff here. Tell me about your rarest of the rare?

TN: The trap table on the Slingerland Glass Glitter kit is the only one of its kind that I know of. No one else has one of those original trap tables. The Ludwig Solo Blocks are almost non-existent outside of here. The W&A double hi hat stand from the 1940s is also very rare. There is actually a picture of Gene Krupa and Avedis Zildjian at the Zildjian factory with one of those double hi hat stands testing out cymbals. Both Krupa and Buddy Rich used Walberg & Auge hi hat stands throughout their careers, and Although Walberg & Auge made most of the old hardware, they also made beautiful drums.

I have two Slingerland Black Beauty snares, and there are less than 20 of them in the world. One of mine came from Canada, and one came from Florida but was originally from Syracuse NY. The strange thing is that three of the rarest things that I have came from Syracuse NY. In the 1930's there must have been a really high-end Slingerland drum dealer around Syracuse NY. The Slingerland Sea Foam Green kit, the Slingerland Green Glass Glitter kit with the trap table, and one of the Black Beauty's all came from Syracuse.

The Duplex afterbeat drum is a cool and rare little drum that has a brush attached. I found a 1940s Leedy Rimshot Gadget that was still in the box. Don McCauley saw it on my website and wanted to get it for Charlie Watts for his birthday. Believe it or not, Charlie didn't have one, and he loved that type of thing. I wanted to give it to Charlie in person, and because of COVID, that never happened.

MD: Charlie would have loved your museum. Can you walk us through the evolution and history of the high hat cymbals and stands that you have here?

TN: It all started with the bock-a-da-bocks. That is a hand-held contraption that held two small cymbals that you clapped together by hand or played with a stick. That evolved into the Billy Gladstone designed Gladstone Cymbals that Chick Webb used. They were made by the Frank Wolf company in New York City. Then there were a bunch of bass drum mounted hand cymbals from the 1930s that created a sound that is impossible to reproduce with any modern instruments or hardware. The actual hi hats started with the Charleston pedal. I have a few Ludwig Charleston's, and I even have a George Stone Charleston, which is probably the only one of its kind. I have several

Showcase of vintage Chinese toms, Temple blocks, Charleston Pedals, Bock-a-da-bocks, Gladstone Cymbals, Rare Duplex afterbeat, Slingerland Duncan Pedal , etc.

of the Walberg & Auge Low Boy's. Then we finally get to the many versions of what we know as the "modern" hi hat and the double hi hat stand.

MD: It was a pretty long evolution to finally get there. You don't really get into the cymbals much, do you?

TN: Most of my cymbals are old Zildjian A's, I have a few K's. The important thing to me is that I have outfitted every kit with the proper sounding cymbals. I do have some very nice thin 13" A's on a Leedy kit. I don't have any 1950's little bebop Gretsch kits that would need a big old K. I'm not an old K nut. There are so many great drummers who are collecting old K's, I'll let them do their thing and spend $3000 a piece on old K's. All of us drum collector-historians have our niche'. I have tried to focus on (primarily) a specific era of drums and drummers that forged a path in drumming and music.

MD: You also have a nice evolution of the bass drum pedals, what can you tell me about that evolution.

TN: Along the way there have been some really unique variations on what we now call the bass drum pedal. It started with the overhang pedal, and then that pedal was adapted to also hit a cymbal with an attached "clanger." Then there was a pedal that did that, but would dampen the cymbal on the backstroke of the pedal. It just kept evolving and getting better.

MD: What is the weirdest drum that you have come across?

TN: I have a "Barry" collapsable bass drum. That is a set from the 20's in which everything was self-contained in a case. The bass drum folds out, and it was designed to fit a 3" snare drum that fits inside the bass drum, the heads actually folded up in quarters so they didn't last long. That's a pretty weird drumset.

MD: That's amazing because the super compact busking mini kits are very popular again now.

TN: There's not much new under the sun.

MD: In a special room adjoining your office you have two special sets that (compared to the rest of the kits) are more "modern." What can you tell me about the two Slingerland white marine pearl kits in that room.

TN: That's my Buddy and Krupa room.

MD: What is the story behind the Buddy kit?

TN: That is a 1968 Buddy Rich kit, I bought that kit from Las Vegas music store. The story goes like this. A woman brought this kit in and said that Buddy had given it to her son. Buddy was in town doing two nights in a casino, and Slingerland wanted him to do a clinic at a store for the local kids and drummers. They weren't going to tear down his kit from the casino gig just to do a clinic and have to bring it right back for that night's show, so the store supplied another kit for Buddy to do the clinic. It is said that Slingerland insisted that all of their dealers keep a Buddy kit in stock for the instance that Buddy was in town and wanted to do a clinic.

1930s Leedy Spiderweb Girl trap set with Leedy elite engraved snare drum, China tom, Charleston pedal.

Those kits never had snares or cymbals with them, just the kit. My Buddy kit was given to a lucky kid who came to a Vegas drum clinic that Buddy did, or at least that's what was told to me. The snare is a snare that Slingerland gave to Buddy on his 60th birthday, and rumor has it that Buddy didn't like it. Steve Smith owned it for a while, and he recently gave it to the museum, along with one of Buddy Rich's monogrammed shield music stands. I also have a 24" bass drum case from when Buddy's band was called the Buddy Rich Orchestra (circa 1945-48,) after he left Tommy Dorsey.

MD: Tell me about the kit that sits next to the Buddy kit?

TN: That is a Krupa *STYLE* kit. It is a Slingerland 1951 White Marine Pearl Radio King kit with a 24, 13, 16, outfitted with original Radio King calf heads. I bought that kit from the original owner in Florida, and I

Collection of 1930s painted head trap sets, Leedy Moonlight Silhouette, Spider Web Girl, Walberg & Auge Mountain Stream scene trap kit.

1930 Ludwig Peacock Pearl trap set with Millstream painted head, Leedy Butterfly Silhouette trap kit with Leedy elite engraved snare drum, Framed painted drum head on wall by listed American artist Lorenz Griffith (1889-1968.)

Showcase with traps, vaudeville and silent film sound effects like whistles, wood blocks, cowbells, Chinese temple blocks and toms, Rare Duplex Afterbeat, Slingerland Duncan Pedal, hand cymbals including bock-a da-bocks, Gladstone cymbals and a collection of vintage bass drum pedals.

restored it. I have to say again, that is NOT a kit that was owned by Krupa, but it is the same model, sizes, and heads that he played in the 40's on "Sing, Sing, Sing."

On a related subject there is a caveat that I have to say for something else in my collection. I have a 1941 Top Hat and Cane kit that Jack Lawton actually rewrapped that before I got it. The drums are authentic, but the Top Hat and Cane is a rewrap.

MD: You have some other more "modern" kits as well.

TN: I have a nice 1960's Slingerland Capri Pearl set, and a nice red & silver sparkle banded kit in 20, 12, 16 from the 60s. I do have an aqua marine pearl Ludwig kit from the 60's that is like a Ringo kit, it's just not the exact same color.

MD: You have mentioned the Slingerland Black Beauty's, what other snares do you have?

TN: There's a lot, but let's start with those. The Slingerland Black Beauty's were in the 1928 catalog, and by the time the next catalog came out, they were no longer made. At one time there was believed to be only 10 in existence. However, (collector) Jim Messina just kept discovering more of them. Bob Campbell (who is the Black Beauty expert) and I each bought one from Jim, and then I found another one in Canada. That seller was a schoolteacher, and he contacted me. A woman's father had died, and she knew that this schoolteacher played drums. She asked him if he would want her father's drum, otherwise she was just going to put the drum in the garbage. She gave him, and when he opened it, it was this Slingerland Black Beauty.

I have a Frank Wolf Sea Green Pearl snare drum that is a 12 lug over 6. That's the kind of snare drum that Chick Webb played, that is a rare color and a cool drum.

I have a wall full of Radio Kings and Broadcasters. I have a very rare Slingerland Broadcaster that was only made for a year because Gretsch had a drum called a Broakcaster. The Slingerland Broadkaster is a solid maple drum with a Walnut Veneer wrap which is a rare finish as well, and it's in mint condition. Then Slingerland got sued and changed the drum name to Radio King. I also have some new and old Ludwig Black Beauty's to show how that drum has evolved.

MD: Can you talk about the differences between all of the different Black Beauty's?

TN: The Slingerland's are the rarest.

MD: Are the Slingerland's two-piece shells with the closed chamber bearing edges? That's what really contributes to the amazing sound of those 1920's Black Beauty drums.

TN: I think so, and I agree. We weighed the Slingerland and the Ludwig Black Beauty shells and the Slingerland was substantially heavier. My first 20s Ludwig Black Beauty was a 1929 with a professional strainer. I bought it from the guy who played in New York in the We Three Orchestra, and I bought his entire set. I just got a 1920s 4x14 two-piece Dance Model ten lug, and a 5x15 eight lug, neither has engraving, I'm cleaning up both of those. The 15 came from my college drum instructor Rene Prinz through my high school music teacher Tom Slavinsky, so that's a very special drum to me. John Aldridge engraved a newer one for me, and I have the Ludwig 100th Anniversary, and a laser engraved one as well. The modern Black Beauty's are a completely different drum from the 20s ones. The sound is different, the construction is different.

MD: Personally, I think there is something "extra" in those old Nickel over Brass shells, I don't know if it's in the metal, or if it's in the unique construction, but there is NOTHING like them!

TN: I also have a Slingerland Rolling Bomber and a Ludwig Victory snare. They are both in mint condition. They were wartime drums that had mostly wooden parts and wooden lugs instead of metal, because during the war metal wasn't allowed to be used. Those drums sound fantastic. Probably the best sounding snare in the whole collection is a 1960s Slingerland Artist 5.5 solid maple shell with a Zoomatic strainer, that is just a fantastic sounding drum.

MD: Have you gotten into restoring drums. Did some of your kits need a lot of restoration?

TN: Sometimes the hand-painted bass drumheads need some restoration, but I really try to buy things that are in mint condition. I clean everything and I'm pretty meticulous about that.

MD: When you clean up a drum, what is your cleaning restoration

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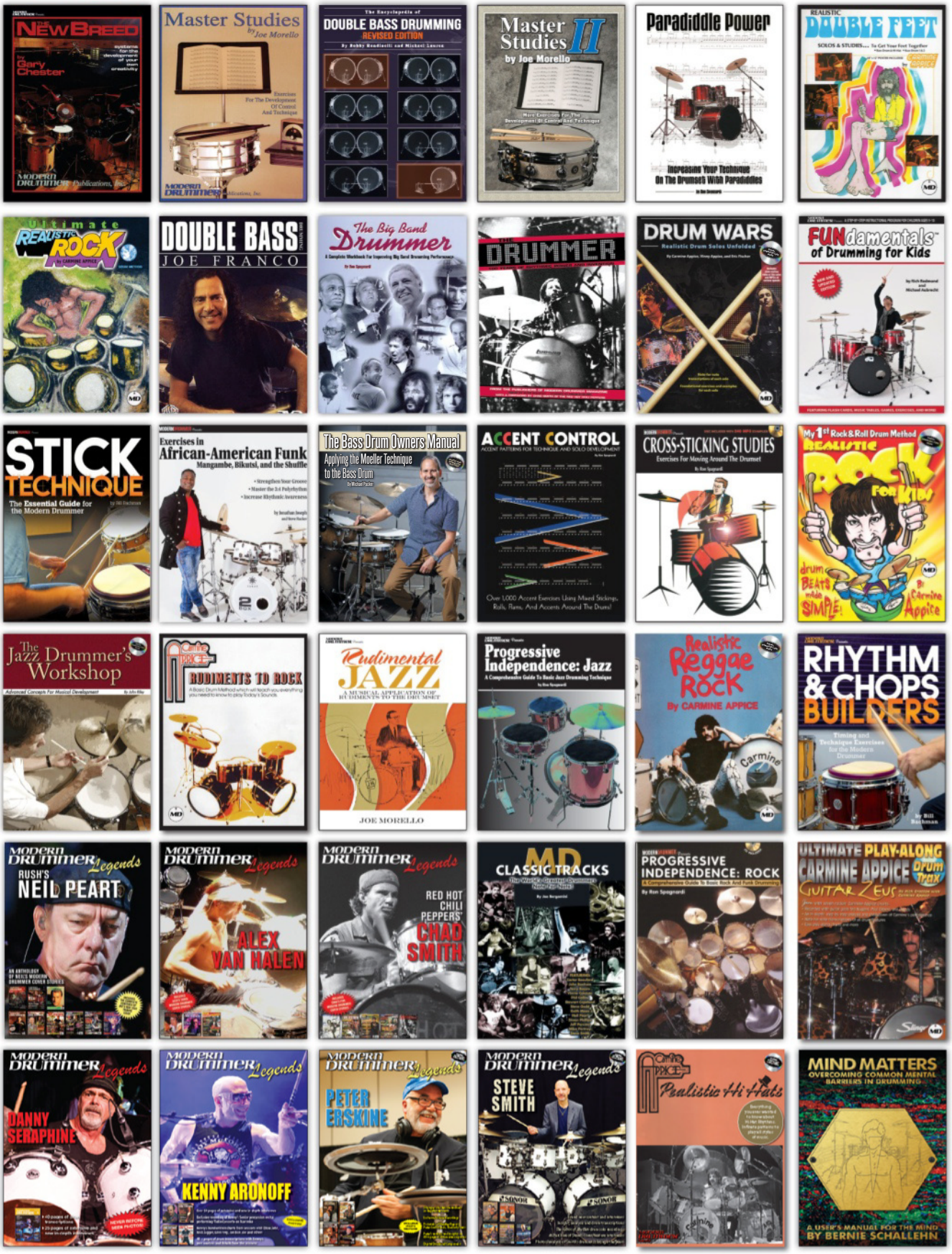

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process?

TN: I take the drum apart completely and polish the shell with Mothers Polish. (Of course) I install a calf head on the top, but I have stopped using slunk heads on the bottom, they are just too temperamental with the weather. I don't like the old corded snares, I actually prefer the Snappy snares from the 20s and 30s. They have brass wires, and they are easy to set up, and they sound great. And *IF* you really know how to tune a snare drum, you don't have to even engage the muffler. In fact, snare drums from the 1920-30's didn't even have mufflers!

MD: Aside from drums, you have a whole cabinet of sound effects from the old silent movie and vaudeville days.

TN: I have tons of whistles both wooden and metal. I have whistles to make every species of bird call that you can imagine. The vaudeville drummers had a trap table filled with various sound effects to create the sounds of gun shots, horses galloping, or glass breaking. I have a Ludwig Railroad Imitator that was made in 1927. That is a box that creates the exact sound of a train rolling down the tracks complete with various whistles, and something that made the sound of the clanging of metal tracks.

MD: Did Ludwig make a lot of those old sound effects? Who has researched and collected all of the sound effects besides you, that is almost as fascinating a subject as the drums.

TN: Ludwig & Leedy made some. However, Walberg & Auge probably made most of them, and then Ludwig would just put a Ludwig decal on the W&A manufactured stuff. Nothing sounds like those original sound effects.

There is a sound effects expert named Nick White from Chicago, he is the master of sound effects. Nick actually just appeared in a movie by Martin Scorsese. There is actually a revival of silent movies going on in our country, and Nick appears at showings with an organist and does the sound effects to the silent films. His website is vintagepercussionsoundeffects.com

MD: Is there anything that you are still looking for, that you don't have, any holy grails?

TN: A 4x14 Slingerland Black Beauty! Supposedly there is one out there, and I'm trying to get it. They appeared in the catalog but were reportedly never made. I think I know where one might exist. Bun E Carlos has said that's THE holy grail of drums. I am looking for two different Leedy & Ludwig painted heads called Balloon Dancer and another called Forest Fire.

I just got a Peacock Pearl kit. I have wanted one of those for a while, but every one that I found was faded. The one I just bought had been in a basement it's whole life, so it's perfect.

MD: Where did the nickname "Two Fer Tim" come from.

TN: I like to have two of everything.

MD: Why?

TN: If you have two of something you always have something to barter with for something that you don't have.

MD: That's a great answer!

TN: It's the joy of the hunt.

MD: How do people arrange to visit your museum?

TN: Come to Oneonta New York, we are really close to Cooperstown and the Baseball Hall of Fame. I am open by appointment Monday through Friday, and people can bring their camera, recorders, whatever. For those that can't do an in person visit, I am starting a paid Zoom session at somewhere around $25 a half hour. In that half hour (or more,) I will show you anything in the museum that you want to see and I'll go into as much detail as the virtual visitor wants.

MD: Zoom is nice, but as I said before, I've been to most of the musical museums around the world, and (for drummers) there is NOTHING as cool as yours!

TN: There is probably no other place in the world that anyone can come and play drums like these in this environment. The drums are all set up, tuned, with the proper accoutrements, calf heads, and era-correct cymbals in a great sounding room. Sure, you could slap together a half-assed collection of old drums to simulate one of these sets, but these are professionally curated, maintained, and are exactly as they appeared in the original 20s and 30s catalogs, and they are sitting right here waiting to be played (by anyone!!!)

To see more about this museum, go to **www.northupdrums.com** Northup Drums Museum 191 Cemetery Hill Rd Oneonta, NY 13820. 607-434-4769.

Original trophy from the 1941 Gene Krupa Swing contest won by Louie Bellson, Joe Raynor won second place, photos, letters from the Slingerland Company to Joe.

Snare drums (from top, left to right:) 1929 5" Ludwig engraved Black Beauty, 1928 RARE 5" Slingerland engraved Black Beauty, 1920s scroll pattern Ludwig engraved Black Beauty, 1920s Leedy Elite engraved Black Beauty, Ludwig 100th anniversary (2009) engraved Black Beauty, 1990s Ludwig Black Beauty engraved by John Aldridge, 2000 Millenium Ludwig limited edition 65/100 Birdseye Maple w/ gold hardware, 100th anniversary (2009) laser engraved Black Beauty, 1920's 4" Ludwig nickel over brass 10 lug dance model, 1927 5" Ludwig Super nickel over brass .

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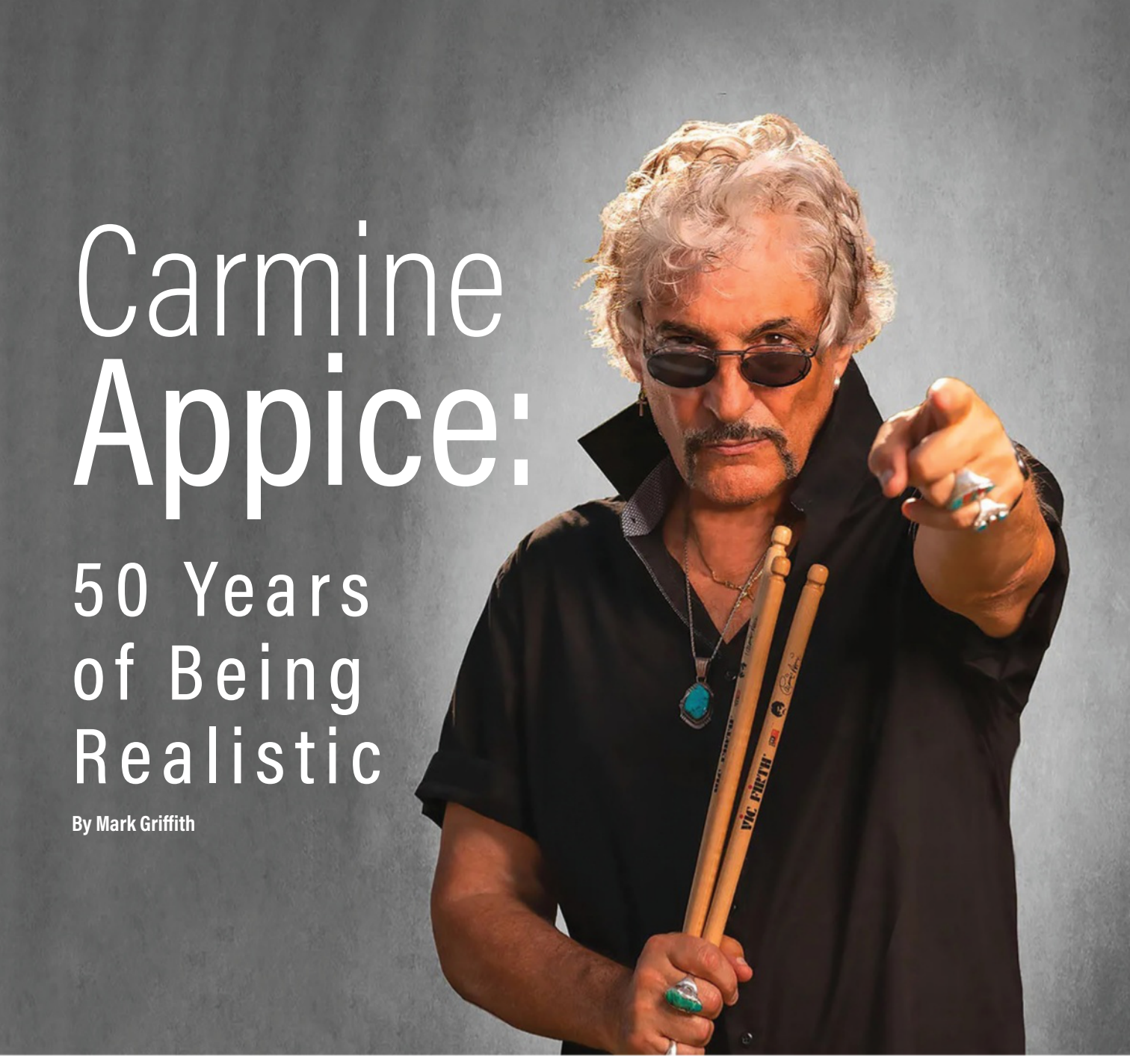
Carmine Appice: 50 Years of Being Realistic

By Mark Griffith



This year will mark the 50th anniversary of Carmine Appice's influential book *Realistic Rock*. *Modern Drummer* has been featuring some excerpts from the updated version of this book (*The Ultimate Realistic Rock*) throughout the year and this will continue with some of the more complex sections. But we wanted to ask Carmine about the origins of this classic book, what went into writing it, and what makes it such a great book.

MD: In 1972 why did a guy who helped invent rock drumming, was touring with Cactus, playing with Jeff Beck, and had huge success with Vanilla Fudge, decide to write a drum book?

CA: I was playing with Cactus at the time, and I was home between tours. I walked into the Sam Ash store in Hempstead NY, I always looked at the book section when I went into stores. This was in 1971 when we all looked like hippies. I saw a book on the shelf from Joel Rothman. It said, "Learn to play rock drums," and had a guy on the cover with an Elvis Presley style haircut. I looked at the material and it seemed sort of stupid. It had every mathematical version of playing a measure of time that was possible. I knew that no rock drummer would ever play like that, and I decided on the spot, I had to write a book on rock drumming.

MD: At the time were there any other books out on rock drumming?

CA: Not that I could find. That's why I did it. During the Cactus tours, the nights were usually pretty crazy, so I decided to forgo all of the craziness and write *Realistic Rock* while we were on tour. At the time,

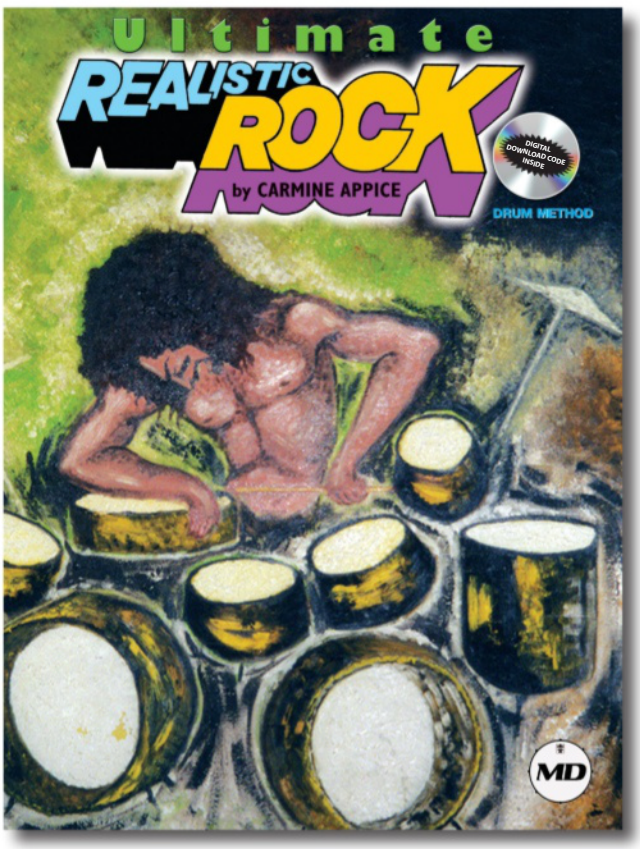
I also had a teaching studio on Long Island. I had 50 or 60 drum students, so while I wrote the book, I was testing it on my students, and I saw that it worked!

MD: I love the way that the book is notated, it's very easy to read.

CA: I designed it like the Chapin book. It has three lines (RH on the ride or hi hats, LH on the snare, and RF on the bass drum.) That makes it easier on the eyes. It was spiral bound, easy to read, in fact you really didn't even have to know how to read music to get started.

At the time I had an attorney that was representing Jimi Hendrix, Zeppelin, Vanilla Fudge, and Cactus, everybody. He got me a book deal with a big publisher called Big Three Publishing, but he didn't sell the copyright. I didn't even know what that meant back then. But it meant that I owned the book and they distributed it. In that first year, it sold about 3,000 copies, which honestly didn't impress me. But I told Joe Morello about that when we were doing a Ludwig Symposium together, and he told me that was huge. He told me that his book had been out for three years or so and it had sold 2,500 copies, so in his opinion selling 3,000 in a year was fantastic.

After a few years when my initial contract was up, and because I had retained the copyright, I could go elsewhere and get another distribution deal, so I went to Almo Distribution. But they told me that I would be the publisher. I didn't like that because I didn't want to deal with the price of paper, getting deals from printers, and stuff like that. I just didn't want to be bothered with that stuff. We changed the cover to the Maple Ludwig kit and moved to Warner Brothers, and I got a big advance from them. After six months I had paid back the advance and I was getting royalties. The book just kept selling. When I went on tour with Beck, Bogert, and Appice I took some on the road and sold them at the merchandise table. No drummers were doing that at the time. The last year that I was at Warner Brothers was when (Modern Drummer president) David Hakim was there and it sold 12,000 copies.



Then I started to learn about the great drummers who had gone through the book. I was told that Dave Weckl, Gregg Bissonette, and Joey Jordison had all gone through it, and they are all great players.

MD: When I was researching Taylor Hawkins for his tribute issue, I learned that he had started in your book too. Where did the grooves that you wrote come from? Were they grooves that you were playing in Cactus and had played in Vanilla Fudge?

CA: I started out simple. I started with grooves that I played when I started playing drums. I grew up playing R&B. I loved the music coming from Motown, Stax, Atlantic, and Muscle Shoals. I listened to Wilson Pickett, James Brown, Aretha Franklin, all of that stuff. I learned later that I was listening to a lot of Bernard Purdie (I just didn't know it at the time.) I fashioned my fills from Max Roach's melodic fills. The very first cool groove that I ever heard was played by Dino Danelli. He was playing a shuffle with a funky bass drum part. It killed me! All of that is incorporated in the book.

My goal was that after someone had finished my book, they would be prepared to go out and play in a rock band. You didn't have to be a great reader or go through every mathematical way to play a rock beat to play in a rock band. I didn't write every variation of sixteenth note rhythms and grooves, I wrote grooves and fills that you would realistically play in a rock band.

I learned to play from the Jim Chapin book, *Stick Control, Syncopation*, and the Charles Wilcoxin book. So all of those books are included in almost every book that I write, and every note that I play. That's my foundation.

MD: Those are all very jazz oriented books. How else did you absorb those three important books into *Realistic Rock*?

CA: I think those three books are the most important drum books ever written. The "idea" of the Chapin book and developing four-way coordination is throughout *Realistic Rock*. When I younger and playing with R&B bands I used the stuff from *Syncopation* in my grooves, so I took those *Syncopation* inspired grooves and included them in the earlier part of *Realistic Rock*. I used some of the stickings (like paradiddles and paradiddles with the diddle in the middle) from *Stick Control*. I was already playing them subconsciously, but then I used them in the book in the "Four Bar Breaks" section. I found that if you combine some of those *Stick Control* stickings with the different rhythms with the left foot (hi hat) you get some really cool grooves with hi hat barks, and it just happens automatically. I expanded on that concept in *Realistic Rock*. The stuff from *Stick Control* applies to everything! There isn't a lot of Wilcoxin stuff in *Realistic Rock*, but I did incorporate some of the Wilcoxin stuff into my later *Rudiments to Rock* book.

MD: It sounds like everything flowed very naturally and easily between the playing with Vanilla Fudge and Cactus, the teaching in your studio, and the books. Through all of that, I think you helped write the blueprint for all of us "drummers who also teach" to learn from and build careers in modern drumming. And personally, I have to thank you for that.

CA: There were a few problems though. The first one was that I was taught playing traditional grip. The first six years of playing drums I only played traditional grip. Eventually, whenever I had to pound things out with Vanilla Fudge I would play matched grip, and whenever I played something technical, I would switch to traditional. But when I was teaching from 1971 through '73, I

decided to force myself to do everything with matched grip, the pounding and the technical stuff. That meant that while I was testing out my book on my students, I was also testing myself and teaching myself matched grip. I did use the Wilcoxin book to help me improve my matched grip.

MD: I did the exact same thing. I never really started playing matched until I started teaching as well.

CA: Another problem arose for me. Every time I changed drum companies, I had to change the cover of the book. Therefore, starting in the 90s I used an oil painting of me playing that my ex-girlfriend did as the cover. It's similar to the drawing from the original cover. When Alfred publishing took over from Warner Brothers, I saw a decrease in sales, but I kept adding to the book. I did a video for the book, I added a linear section, an odd time section, and now we have *The Ultimate Realistic Rock*. The original book was about 60 pages, and now it's 95 pages or so.

MD: With the many additions it's stayed current and modern.

CA: It was always my intention that after someone went through it, they could play in a rock band. So with the popularity of jazz-rock and progressive rock I had to make additions. When drummers started playing all of the combinations of linear ideas in fills, I had to add that stuff too.

MD: Did the original version have a double bass drum section.

CA: Yes, it had a small section on double bass. But I've added to it through the years, and then I did the *Realistic Double Bass* book.

MD: Where did the word "Realistic" come from?

CA: I was one of the first rock star drummers. So when I wrote a rock drumming book, it was realistic. It wasn't written by a drum teacher, or a jazz drummer. Realistically, I'm a rock drummer, so when I wrote a book, it was *Realistic Rock*. By calling everything "Realistic" I was creating a brand. Then we updated it with more information, now with even more information, it's *The Ultimate Realistic Rock*.

MD: Exactly what inspired the linear section?

CA: Rick Gratton sent me his book called *Rick's Licks*, and when I tried to read through it, I really couldn't follow it. The way it was written was very confusing to me. Rick and I did a clinic together up in Canada, and when I saw what he was doing I told him that we should release a video together with my video company. I told him that his stuff was cool, but the way he explained it was just too complicated. We did a video together, but I helped him break down his ideas to make them more understandable.

In the process, I came up with the Linear Rudiments: RLF, RLLF, RLRRF, RLRLRF. Groups of three, four, five, and six notes. Then you combine different combinations of them to create groups of 16 (one bar of sixteenth notes) and put them all over the drums. I just clarified Rick's ideas and made them easier to learn. Then I began playing those ideas in clinics and on gigs. I saw how well they worked in a "realistic" setting. Then I incorporated those ideas into *The Ultimate Realistic Rock* book.

MD: Because they became "Realistic."

CA: Rick and I have since become very good friends.

MD: There are a few things that I really like about the book. I liked

that you put in a shuffle section.

CA: In Cactus, we played a lot of shuffles, we were a great shuffle band. The tune "Parchment Farm" was a fast double bass drum shuffle. And at the time, it was the fastest one on record. When we recorded that tune, we wanted it to be faster than "I'm Coming Home" by Ten Years After. Alex Van Halen said the inspiration for the tune "Hot for Teacher" was "Parchment Farm" because they loved Cactus. If I were to update that section, I would include ruffs in the middle of them. In the tune "Blue Murder" I do a lot of that.

MD: You have an interesting concept and origin behind playing double bass, can you explain that to me?

CA: When I was young, I always wanted to play double bass, but I couldn't afford a second bass drum, or a mic stand with a boom. Then when I eventually got a second bass drum, I really didn't know what to do with it.

MD: There were no double bass drum books at the time.

CA: NONE! I started to adapt playing melodic Max Roach fills onto two bass drums. But for beats and grooves I didn't know how to use the two bass drums. However, I was already playing grooves while my left foot played quarter notes or eighth notes on the hi hats. Since I was already playing those rhythms with my left foot, I just moved my left foot to the bass drum, and got some really cool grooves and sounds. When you played the &'s on the left foot it really got weird. That was my original concept of using two bass drums. Then I started adding things to those initial three ways of using the left foot on the bass drum. That wasn't what Ginger Baker or Keith Moon were doing with double bass drums, so my thing had a different sound.

> When I wrote a rock drumming book, it was realistic. It wasn't written by a drum teacher, or a jazz drummer. Realistically, I'm a rock drummer, so when I wrote a book, it was called *Realistic Rock*.

MD: What inspired you to put the odd time stuff into the book?

CA: I loved it. Joe Morello was the guy that I first heard playing odd times. When I heard "Take Five" I was floored so I learned to play that solo. I learned all of my odd time stuff from Joe Morello. Then when I heard the Mahavishnu Orchestra with Billy Cobham. That was it for me, it blew my mind. By listening to them I figured out that when you play quarter notes in 9/8 the quarter note flips around from the downbeat to the upbeat in every other measure.

I started playing a lot of odd time music with Jeff Beck, and I did a lot of it with a band I had with Jeff Berlin and Ray Gomez. Even with *Guitar Zeus* there is some odd time stuff, and there is a lot of it on my new Appice Perdomo Energy Overload recordings.

MD: There is something else that I really like about your book, and it might seem "obvious," (but unfortunately it isn't.) You wrote everything and have students play everything in four bar phrases. That just makes musical sense. But people still suggest that students repeat exercises five or ten times in a row, which makes no musical sense. If, as a teacher, you can start a student to eventually (and subconsciously) feel a four-bar phrase from day one, it will eventually help them play music.

CA: The Chapin book was written like that, so was *Stick Control* and *Syncopation*.

MD: And Wilcoxin. That's why they are classic and quality educational books.

CA: If you can feel a four-bar phrase without counting it, that's a huge thing! That's why the longer solos from my book are 8, 12, 16, 20, and 24 bar solos.

MD: That's what I'm saying. And each of the lines when you are learning a groove in your book is written as four bars.

CA: Like I said, the ability to hear four bars is HUGE. Believe it or not, no one has ever mentioned that to me. That's a great observation by you.

MD: I'd like to pass a law that no beginner or intermediate music books should ever have any examples or solos that are not written with four bar phrases in mind.

CA: I have had a lot of students throughout the years, and I don't think anyone has every picked up on that fact. You make a GREAT point! That's unbelievable, I never really thought about that.

MD: At some point, it's really the most important thing! Feeling a phrase in music, playing in phrases… Beyond time and groove, it doesn't get more important than that.

CA: I agree, especially if you are playing in a band! It will help you create a musical drum part that goes somewhere sensible and musical. Whether you are playing in 7/8, 9/8, or 4/4, you are usually thinking in four bar phrases.

MD: You also suggested open handed playing in your books, although it wasn't called that. You just suggested that people play the RH rhythms with the LH on the ride or hi hat. What inspired those suggestions?

CA: Seeing Billy Cobham. I knew he was a righty, and sometimes he played righty and sometimes he played lefty. So I started doing that too. Then I suggested it in the book.

MD: Again, it became "Realistic" right?

CA: For a while everything was about my teaching. I would go to concerts, and I would film them from behind for my teaching studio. Many different drummers let me do this because we were friends. Once a month I would have video day at my studio. I would show these videos to a room full of students. Then we would talk about it, and I would teach them how to play what they saw.

MD: As someone who has taught your book for years, do you have any advice for other drummers who are using your book to teach?

CA: I would suggest that you teach it like it is written. If you go through (or have a student go through) the 18 different ways to go through the book, you're ready to rock. You can add other stuff to make things more complicated if you want, or to develop another sense of coordination. That's fine. But those original 18 ways to mix up the right hand and left foot, and the left hand and the left foot, all came from teaching in my studio and playing with Vanilla Fudge and Cactus. They worked then, and they work now. That's what *Realistic Rock* and *The Ultimate Realistic Rock* is based on. My concept has always been: Count it out loud, and play it out loud. That approach works.

MD: And it's "Realistic."

CA: You've got it!

Check out Carmine's Books and Drummer profile page at moderndrummer.com

Mark Allee

The Daru Sessions: The Evolution of His Set-Up

By Mark Griffith

Modern Drummer is starting a new series with Daru Jones called "The Daru Sessions." In these series of interviews, Daru and I are going to dive deep into several subjects. The first subject of these talks is Daru's unique drum set-up.

Daru Jones's drumming is always evolving, and he is on the road again playing with Jack White. His drumming on White's previous recordings *Lazaretto*, *Blunderbuss*, *Boarding House*, and the newest *Fear the Dawn* has been surprising to those who have known him as primarily a hip-hop styled drummer. Daru still brings a slick hip-hop drumming approach (as can be heard on his two newest projects, *Daru Jones Play the Breaks (Live at Layman,)* and *Daru State of Mind*. But Daru's playing with Jack White it is now further infused with a hard rockin' edge. This new ingredient to Daru's ever-expanding vocabulary, and Jack White's live setlist has inspired Daru's unique drum set-up to evolve even further.

Mark Allee

MD: You have always set your drums up in a very creative-unique way, now with the new Jack White tour, your set-up has evolved even more. Where did your current set-up with Jack White come from?
DJ: We are playing a lot of Jack's older music from The White Stripes and The Dead Weather. We are also doing music from all of Jack's older records. On Jack's last record he jumped into the world of sampling and looping as well. Some people might not know this, but Jack's a drummer, so he and is engineers are very tuned in to drum sounds. For this tour the band learned about 100 songs from his back catalog alone, then there was the stuff from of the new record which I played on. On this record Jack was using different electronic sounds and samples of things like finger snaps too. So when you combine all of that music with the angled drums that I have been doing for the last 15 years or so, there was a lot to incorporate in my touring set.

I was looking at rock drummers like Ray Luzier, Portnoy, Stewart Copeland, John Bonham, Mitch Mitchell, and when Vinnie was playing with Sting. Those drummers all have these monster kits, and big drums. So for this tour with Jack, I wanted to find my rock drumming voice, and throw in everything and the kitchen sink. I wanted to fuse my traditional set with some pancake style drums, and the Roland electronic pads and the SPD. I have more Paiste Sound EFX cymbals, and bells. I need to be able to play anything whenever Jack whispers what song we are going to next in my ear. People are used to seeing my play small drums, and some people seem to have a problem that I am out here playing a big kit and big drums, but Jack White is a rock gig, so I need to play a big rock kit.
MD: It's all about the gig. If you are playing your drum and DJ gigs, you play an appropriate kit, and if you are doing Jack White's rock gig, you have to bring an appropriate kit.
DJ: I like to pay attention to detail with sounds from his records because I know that's what the audience wants to hear. That means that I have to have instant access to all of those sounds from all of those bands and all of those records. So this set is the best of all worlds. This set incorporates sounds that I am incorporating stuff from my gospel roots, through my R&B and blues playing, to my hip hop stuff, rock music, and now the electronic music.
MD: So many people think that you play "your drumset" for the gig. But what you are saying is that the gig determines what "your drumset" actually is or should be.
DJ: The music is always supposed to tell you what to play. It's not about thinking, OK I am an amazing drummer and I am going to play "my style" on anything that I play and with anyone whom I play. It isn't about that at all. That's not the case. If you want a career you got to play the music that is happening around you.

On this new record there is a song that Q-Tip from A Tribe Called Quest raps. So I trigger his vocal track. There is another tune called "What's the Trick?" with a lot of electronic sounds that I am triggering.
MD: What is your set-up for this Jack White tour?
DJ: The drum sounds are really dialed in on this tour. The front of house engineer has done a great job getting huge drum sounds, and I am really trying to provide him with the accurate sounds from the record. To do that I have a 26" bass drum, my snare drum is a 15", and I have some other custom toys that you can see in the photos.
MD: A 26" bass drum, that's a lot of "boom." But a big bass drum and small toms that's interesting.
DJ: Then I have some roto toms in 8, 10, and 12 as a shoutout to guys like Stewart Copeland. I first saw Roto Toms in church and loved the way they sound and the way they looked.
MD: I first heard Roto Toms in go-go music in bands like Trouble Funk, Rare Essence, and Chuck Brown and the Soul Searchers.
DJ: It was really cool when Terry Bozzio started using the parts of Roto Toms and played them and called them Spoxe.
MD: What cymbals are you using on this tour?
DJ: My main ride is a 26" Giant Beat. The drum sound on the last Jack White record is the closest thing to it was in the White Stripes when Meg was just bashing, there is a lot of that vibe on this new record, so for that, the Giant Beat ride cymbal is my best friend.

Then I have a 14" Splash Stack, a 22" Precision China, an 8" and a 10" bells, a Modern Essentials 22" that I am using for a crash, my hi hats are 16" Giant Beats.
MD: I have been a Paiste endorser since 2000, and I am guilty of not knowing a lot about Giant Beats, but when they re-issued them and I played them, I was in love. The 14" hats, the 18" and 20" crashes are just killer. They are great transparent cymbals, and they record amazingly.
MD: So when and why did you first begin to play the drumset at the extreme angles?
DJ: In between Jack White tours I play other gigs like with my DJ and drum band and my rock hip-hop band called th1rt3en with rapper Pharoahe Monch. I use my small PDP signature travel kit for those.

That kit is an 18" kick, 13" snare, 10" and 14" toms. I use my signature Paiste cymbals for that too, I mix my DJ 45's with the 22" Dark Energy ride cymbal for those gigs.

For Jack White's *Lazaretto* and *Blunderbuss* records and tours I used a 26" kick, a 16" snare. My tom and the marching snare were to the left of the hi hat, and my floor tom was in the regular place on the right. One issue with that set was that it was hard getting snare stands to hold the 16" snare real securely. But I was setting up the drums angled away from me on that tour. The only difference was for this tour I have all of the toms on my left, and all of my cymbals on the right, except the hi hat is on the left in the standard spot.

MD: Did you start to put all of the cymbals on the right because you had seen some of the older English rock drummers do that? I know that Bill Ward from Black Sabbath, and Charlie Watts did it for a while as well.

DJ: I didn't know that. All of my set-ups challenge me to be intentional when I play something. When I hit any drum or cymbal, that sound has to count. I want to really be intentional when I play. I never want to play a sound because it's convenient, or because it just happens to be there. I want to play a sound because that's the sound that I want to hear. I also like to get more sounds out of a limited amount of drums.

I started touring with Jack White in 2012 after the *Blunderbuss* record. But before I started playing with Jack, I was playing with mostly hip-hop and rappers with artists like Talib Kweli and Black Milk. In fact, Black Milk is who introduced me to Jack. But when I was playing with those guys I was using a small bare bones set-up with just kick, snare, floor tom, hi hats and ride. That was a little after the time that Questlove had starting doing that, and I didn't want my drums to look like Questlove's.

In the hip-hop community, even as a kid, it was all about identity. If you looked like anyone else in your look or your fashion you had problems. That stuck with me. So when I was learning to play drums I wanted to sound like Vinnie and Weckl and I had similar kits to theirs. But I knew that I would have to develop my own drumming identity. When I was younger, I started playing with hip-hop bands and I realized that I didn't need a big kit, so I downsized. I stripped everything away, I was just using that stripped down kit. But then I saw Questlove playing with The Roots. I didn't want people to think that I was copying Questlove, and I never wanted to be in the same room with him and have him think that I was copying him. So I had to figure out a way to create my own identity, and that was when the angles on the drums started. Then of course I had to fine tune my vocabulary to work on those kits. I worked on that set-up and my musical vocabulary to create a musical identity.

I was aware of the OG's who used those extreme angles on their drums first like Buddy Rich and Philly Joe Jones. Although I know that they tilted their drums to the side because of traditional grip, I knew that I could take that inspiration and use it in my own way. There wasn't a scientific reason that I started doing it, it was all for looks and create an identity like Bozzio did with his sets, Vinnie with his China cymbal on the left. I remember reading about all of those drummers in *Modern Drummer* when I was coming up, and they all had created an identity, and a unique drum set that people identified with them.

MD: So exactly when did your drumset with the extreme angles start?

DJ: That started in 2006 when I was playing with hip-hop group called Slum Village.

MD: That was the group that J Dilla produced?

DJ: Dilla died in 2006, and Slum Village had been invited to play some festivals and big gigs that required having a live band. I was recommended to come on board as the drummer by their music director at the time. It was when I was living in Pittsburgh for a while, playing with steel drummer Phil Solomon and his band, Solomon Steel. When I started playing with Slum Village is when I changed my kit setup, because like I said, they were well-known, and doing a similar thing to the Roots at the time, and I wanted to steer clear of Questlove's thing.

MD: When you made that change in your set-up, how did that affect you playing?

DJ: It helped me create a lot of new vocabulary, and that's when I really started paying attention to detail and thinking like a producer behind the drums. I started to become a live MPC drummer. I played music so it not only sounded like the record, but it felt like the record. That meant being aware if a track was top heavy or bottom heavy. I discovered that there was a way to play acoustic drums on a gig and keep the integrity and the spirit of the original recording, even though it was made on an MPC. That's what I focused on. I'm still learning and developing, but I think that I'm starting to develop a drumming identity and voice.

MD: We'll get into that next time!

The Daru Sessions *is the first of a four-part installment of Daru Jones discussing several specific subjects in music and drumming.*

Mark Allee

SONOR
SABIAN
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EVANS

CHRIS LESSO

Life Through Rhythm

By Mark Griffith

Chris Lesso is a renaissance drummer: bandleader, sideman, clinician, teacher… His studies with the great Dom Famularo and the legendary Jim Blackley have helped him form a great foundation for his drumming and his teaching. Chris' playing with his band Modus Factor, Cirque Du Soleil *Cavalia*, and his touring with Wild T and the Spirit (led by guitarist Tony Springer,) shows his forward looking yet grounded drumming approach, and his up-coming book will help any student become the best version of themselves that they can be.

MD: Your new book is called *Life Through Rhythm*, what does that mean?
CL: Simply put, it's believing in who you are, taking it to 2.0. Excellence. But it's really more than that. My new book and my podcast are both called *Life Through Rhythm* and they focus on the fact that everyone has a voice, so let's bring out that voice and release the confidence that your voice can help you create within yourself.

The first chapter is called "Your Escape Velocity" and it discusses how you use most of your fuel to "just" blast off. Another concept that I talk about is called Wrong and Strong. That deals with not being afraid to make mistakes. I have a chapter called "How You Move is How You Groove" which discusses body language and movement at the drums. The "Language of Drumming" chapter is about breathing, being able to speak what you play, and being solid on the grid. I have an important chapter called "The Rhythm of Practice." I could write an entire book on that. "The Rhythm of Practice" discusses the inner-meditation and the outer goals of practice, and just the art of practice in general.
MD: I often talk to students about HOW to practice. I think that's an overlooked yet vitally important subject.
CL: I agree! The entire book is tied up in the final chapter "Living LTR Every Day" which deals with longevity. That chapter also deals with aligning your drumming movements with nature, stage fright, disappointment, and presents it all in a way that shows how you can play drums until you are 105 *and beyond.*
MD: What is your musical background?
CL: I started playing music by studying classical piano, but I was obsessed with drums. However, the piano gave me so much that I would tap into later. Early on, I didn't have any drum teachers, so I

wound up doing and learning a lot of stuff the hard way. When I was 19, I sought out Jim Blackley and Dom Famularo

MD: Jim Blackley was a legendary teacher, and unfortunately most drummers (outside of Canada) don't know about him. I was introduced to him by (another great Canadian drummer) Terry Clarke, but I never got to study with Jim. I am studying both of Jim's books (with some guidance from some of his students) what was that like?

CL: He was like a Freddie Gruber or a Jim Chapin type of figure. Like a Yoda of drumming. His wife would always greet you at the door with a cup of tea. He just looked right into your soul. He was big into deleting things, focusing on less, and not chasing your

tail. The interesting thing about Jim is that there is a shelf-life of about two to five years of studying with Jim. At some point he calls you, and in his great Scottish accent he says, "Hello lad, do you have a pen, here is the number of a great piano teacher named Brian Rudolph, he's expecting your call, that's what you need to do now." And it wasn't because you had done anything "*wrong*" it was sort of a graduation. It happens to every one of Jim's students.

MD When you studied with him did you work from both books?

CL: Yes, the rolls book, and the second giant jazz book. I can still feel him, he was very special. Then I started with Dom, and he became my mentor-hero-teacher. He came to a small town in Canada and did a drum clinic when I was 17. Dom and Jim Blackley are the seeds of *Life Through Rhythm*. Victor Wooten is another important figure to me. He is as close as it gets to *Life Through Rhythm*. But there have been different drummers whose work and words have really resonated with me.

MD: Who?

CL: Billy Cobham, Benny Greb, and Steve Smith. I also did a Life Through Rhythm podcast on Vic Firth, he really exemplifies what *Life Through Rhythm* is.

MD: Vic Firth is an important man in this industry, and there are *(I'm sure)* some young drummers who don't even know that he was a GIANT and a legendary musician. To many *(I guess,)* he's just the name on a stick. Peter Erskine told me in his Legends interview (for his Legends book,) that the Boston Symphony would sometimes tune to Vic. Former BSO bassist Buell Neidlinger told Peter that the entire orchestra built its pitch upon Vic's intonation. There could not be a bigger tribute to Vic's ear, musicality, and the role of the timpani (and, by extension, the drummer) in a "band."

CL: WOW… That's amazing! We should just stop right there.

MD: Yes, that's a pretty cool little (maybe not so little) fact. But please keep going about your development.

CL: After Jim and Dom, I became interested in the tabla and Indian music. I knew Steve Smith was studying Konnakol, but I wanted to feel the drums and get the rhythm in my hands, so I started studying tabla with a guy in Toronto. Then I went to India to study Tabla. I discovered the language of rhythm, and the wider view of rhythm as a voice. Drums are an ancient power. Sure, the drumset has been around for only 100 years or so, but the drums themselves go back thousands of years.

MD: I sounds like you and I both believe in the greater power of the drums?

CL: Absolutely. I have a student who is a retired military officer, and he suffered from a lot of PTSD from his years in Afghanistan, and his drum studies are helping him with his PTSD.

On my podcast I have all sorts of guests. All of my different podcasts are about the drums, but they go beyond drumming. I have had David Rutherford on. He was a Navy Seal, and we talked overcoming fear and anxiety. I had Mark Bowden on, and we analyzed the body language of drummers like Neil Peart, Stewart Copeland, and Tony Williams.

MD: Stylistically, where are you coming from as a drummer?

CL: Carter Beauford, Jojo Mayer, Simon Phillips, Tony Williams, and Lars Ulrich are my big five.

MD: Does all of that come out in your band?

CL: My band Modus Factor is a combination of world rhythms (Indian and African) and electronica, so I am heavily influenced by everything that is included in those. But overall, I love any music that is pushing the bar and exposing who YOU are. If something doesn't have that spirit or spark, I'm not really interested.

MD: I see that you play open-handed, do you play open-handed all of the time?

CL: Yes, 100% of the time. I fell in love with it when I saw Dom playing at KOSA. I love the feeling of it, and I love the body language and the mindset of open-handed playing. Of course, seeing Simon Phillips play open handed is inspirational, but also seeing Steve Gadd, David Garibaldi, or Kenny Aronoff do it once or twice a set is really inspirational too. But I also like the "weaker side" and the "split down the middle" approach too.

It was amazing when I would teach it to young students who were already playing cross-handed. At first, I thought that I could have been messing them up. But then I saw their brains just flip the switch, and I knew it would be OK.

MD: After hearing your record *The Picasso Zone*, what more can you tell me about your band Modus Factor?

CL: I'm really proud of Modus Factor because of two reasons. First, it's something that I conceived and put together. I picked the musicians in the band because they sound like themselves. And second, it's challenging because I am the "worst" one in the band. The other guys in the band really push me to shoot for the next level because they are that good. I first heard about that idea from Victor Wooten. He said, "Strive to always feel like you're the worst one in the band." It's meant with a bit of humor, not that you're literally *"the worst"* (which is negative and kills confidence.) Instead, to feel like you really have to deliver 110% and pull all of your potential out, by surrounding yourself with A-players.

It really all comes down to Bruce Lee for me. His book was called *The Art of Expressing the Human Body.* He wanted to see who you were through your motions. He invited people to bring themselves into the martial arts. He really broke down the traditions of his time. That's what I am trying to do with drumming.

MD: Be like water, right? (A common Bruce Lee expression.)

CL: That's it!

Check out Chris's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

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The Game Changers Part 2

By Billy Ashbaugh

Welcome back for part two! Last month we discussed several important topics that I felt were monumental in my growth as a player. Those were: **understanding subdivision, learning to read music, developing your ears, and learning to write charts/roadmaps.** Once I was able to understand and utilize these ideas, my playing took a huge leap forward. Trust me, it will do the same for you. If you missed it, please go back and check it out.

For this months article we will take a look at the four remaining topics: **recording yourself and listening back, effective looping, proper practice structure, and always using a metronome and counting.**

Recording yourself and listening back is something I've been doing almost as long as I've been playing. I'm not sure why, but for some reason I just instinctively did this. I'm so glad I did. This enabled me to hear how I was *actually* playing, not how I *thought* I was playing. This was a real eye opener. I can remember back in the day I would carry around old portable cassette decks. Sometimes I used the room mic on the unit and sometimes there were auxiliary audio inputs that I would use. It just depended on that particular gig. If I was using microphones on my drums, then I would bring a mixer with a line out to record. This way I had better audio. If it was a smaller gig, then I would just use the built in mic from the tape deck. Either way, I made it a point to always listen back to my performance. This was a huge step toward me fine tuning my playing and pocket. Simply put, the tape doesn't lie. During my early gigs, I found it very difficult (if not impossible) to tell if my playing was really "on point" and sounded good with the rest of the band. Back then I was just too focused on the art of playing the drums. I simply wasn't able to "pull myself" out of the moment to accurately listen. The only way to do that is by recording yourself and listening back. Sometimes my playing would sound much better than it "felt" at the time. And sometimes it actually sounded as bad as I thought. Over time, I was able to develop my ears to the point where I could tell in real time (as I'm playing) if something was off with my playing. This won't happen over night but it *will* happen if you put the time in. I would recommend recording everything, practice sessions, band rehearsals, and gigs. This way you have an honest assessment of your playing for the entire learning process, not just at the gig. Think of it this way, it's better to expose and fix any problems in your playing in the "practice room" before you get together with other musicians to play.

Another cool thing about recording yourself is what I call "the hot seat". That's the nervous feeling you get when you know you're recording yourself to listen back. Often, I've been in situations where the music director would record the band and then everyone would listen back and critique. Talk about the hot seat! The same feeling happens in the studio when the engineer hits record and the little red light goes on. Having these nervous situations pull you "out of your zone" is a great way to find out exactly how comfortable you really are with the material. When you're in this situation, only the things that you "own" through muscle memory will show up. The more you record yourself, the more you put yourself in "the hot seat ". Thanks to technology, recording yourself is very easy these days. No more carrying around tape decks and cables. Just pick up your phone and hit record.

One of my best practice tools is **effective looping**. This is my "go to" process for getting comfortable with any new idea behind the kit. When done properly, there is no better method for settling in and "owning" new or uncomfortable material. As we know, muscle memory is the only way to truly get comfortable with an idea. You can loop anything from one beat to an entire section of a song. The trick here is to isolate the trouble spots for efficient and effective looping. You want to get "in and out" of these spots as quickly as possible. By this I mean, create your loop so you don't spend extra time playing anything that you're already comfortable with. If you're working on a fill going into the chorus, you don't need to play eight measures of time prior to the fill. Try playing just one measure before the fill. Likewise, play just one measure of time when you come out of the fill as well. This will set up your most effective looping. When you do this, you are spending the most time possible on *just* the spot that needs it. You're no longer wasting precious practice time playing stuff that you're already comfortable with. It may not seem like much, but it really ads up. The more frequently you play an exercise in any given amount of time, the better your brain (and limbs) will settle and "own" that idea. I use this technique with my students and it works great every time.

While preparing for a tour with 'NSYNC, I learned first hand how well this works. We (the band) were learning a new song and the bridge section just wasn't feeling right. The music director had us loop only the bridge for about ten minutes. Sure enough, a few minutes into repeating the section, everything started to settle and it began to feel great. You see, we only played the bridge one time in the entire song, unlike the verse or chorus that were repeated several times throughout the song. By isolating and focusing on just the bridge, we were able to achieve the same comfort level as the rest of the song. Once again proving this technique works great.

One crucial lesson I learned years ago: You will perform at the comfort level you achieve in the practice room. Being aware of how to best **structure your practice time** will help you get the most from your time invested. If you're like me, you don't have countless hours available to commit to practicing. So naturally it makes sense to structure your time so you can master those ideas as quickly as possible. Here are a few tips.

Use a timer for your practice sessions. This will give you an honest assessment of exactly how much practice you're actually doing. You'd be surprised how much time you're really "goofing off" during practice. A good practice session should be nothing but struggling to achieve something new. If you can already play it, then you're not practicing. It's important to keep that in mind. What I do is warm up first for a few minutes. Then I set the timer for 30 minutes. Once I hit start on the

timer, I block all distractions out and bury my head in the exercise. The next thing I know, the timer is going off and I got 30 minutes of solid, uninterrupted, practice. I have found that if I'm out in the studio for three or four hours during a day working on stuff, I actually get maybe two or three hours of real practice time in. Before I used this approach, I would think I had gotten four or five hours of practice in, but the reality was I only got three. Big difference. So if you really want to keep track of how much practice you're getting, grab that timer and hit start. You might be surprised!

Most drummers pick up the sticks to learn the art drumming *and* to play music. For me, taking an idea from a book and playing it musically involves different stages. That's why I break my practice time into three areas. Each area requires a different mind set and also achieves different results. The first is what I call the "Grunt Stage". This stage is always first. Here, I'm discovering new ideas and often my head is buried in a book. I'm busy breaking things down, counting, repeating, and basically trying to gain full control over my limbs. I'm constantly struggling in this stage. This is what most people consider to be your "normal" approach to practicing. This is all fine and good but I soon discovered I needed to approach my newly found material in a different way.

For the next stage, I close the books, stop counting, turn off the bright lights (for reading music) and sit with my new ideas with a different mind set. I call this my "Exploring Stage". Let's look at this process. In other words, how is the idea broken down, what's the subdivision, how is it being phrased, where are the accents falling, and what voicing's are being used. Then I take that idea and begin to move it around the kit. You will be surprised how many different ways you can play an idea. Even if it's as simple as moving to the ride for a groove you just learned. Or maybe adding a hi-hat part with your left foot. I've even discovered that a sticking pattern for a groove can make an awesome sounding fill around the toms. The cool thing is, I'm now adding or altering the idea on my own. I'm no longer getting ideas from a book. These are creative ideas that I stumbled on myself through exploring. For me, this stage is a lot of fun. The trick is my mind set while doing this. I'm no longer invested in *learning* this idea, I already did that in my grunt stage. My mind is now open to think *creatively*. The point is to intentionally put yourself into this frame of mind. If you don't put enough time in the grunt stage, this step will fail miserably. You need to have complete control over your idea before your mind can open up and explore in this way. You should start to notice a whole new level of comfort as you do this. Your ideas should begin to flow and become more musical.

This leads to the third stage: "Thinking Musically". When I sit behind the kit, the *only* thing I'm thinking about is the music. Technical stuff is last thing on my mind. I'm never counting or thinking about anything I play. I do my best to get inside the music and play for the song. I let what I'm hearing in the song dictate what's best to play. I have found that if I don't take my ideas through the first two stages, this step doesn't work. Not only do I need to have control over things, but I must also put the exploring time in before my mind can open up and play musically.

The best thing about this approach is I now have three areas I can choose from to dig into. Some days I might feel like doing the "grunt work" and getting some new ideas down. Or, some days I might feel like just exploring my ideas around the kit. Either way, the point is I'm now more motivated and focused to practice because I get to work on what ever I'm interested in that day.

I also recommend separating your "hand time" from your "kit time." It helps to have a separate space so you can focus on your hands without all of the distractions that come with playing the kit (reading, co-ordinating limbs, counting etc.) This uninterrupted hand time is crucial. It will allow you to concentrate on the fundamentals of your grip *before* you jump behind the kit. Remember, the brain can only process so much information at once. It's important to create a zone where you can do this. Set up a practice pad in a space that you can get to anytime the urge strikes. It's awesome to have 24/7 access to working on your grip and fundamental hand technique.

Also, try jotting down notes for your practice routine. Back in the day, I would have six or seven books that I was working on at the same time. It really helped me to jot down notes for every exercise. I would mark where I was in the book, along with side notes for anything that was giving me trouble. If I altered the exercise or phrased it differently, I would also write that down. This way if I took a short break from any of those books, I could come back later and pick up right where I left off. Also, get in the habit of writing down the tempo for everything you do.

> While preparing for a tour with 'NSYNC, I learned first-hand how well this works. We (the band) were learning a new song and the bridge section just wasn't feeling right. The music director had us loop only the bridge for about ten minutes.

This leads us to the final subject. **Always use a metronome and count!** Simply put, drummers *must* have a good concept of steady time. The only way to assure this is by practicing with a metronome. That's the true test to see if you have *control* over an idea. If you can lock your exercise with the metronome, then you own that idea. I know metronomes can be intimidating in the beginning. However, if you're patient and work at it, over time you will be able to lock everything you play with a metronome. Don't be afraid to turn off the metronome if it's giving you too much trouble. Work more on *controlling* that idea on its own, then re-introduce the metronome until you're able to stay with it. This is a great time to record yourself. (Sound familiar?) Listen back and try to determine if you're ahead or behind the beat. Quite often, just making yourself aware of a problem will fix the problem. If you're recording and listening back, you will know to "push or pull" those notes and get them to line up with the metronome.

Lastly, let's talk about the **importance of counting.** Think of counting as the "rhythmic grid". Your spoken voice will provide the perfect spot for each note to land. In the beginning, this can be difficult. Just slow everything down and be patient. As long as you're counting, it's just a matter of time before your limbs start to line up. The good news is, you will only need this skill when you are learning a new idea. Over time, your voice will go away. Think of it like training wheels for your bicycle. Once you have your balance, it's no longer necessary to have them. Likewise, take them off too soon and you'll crash. It's the same thing with counting. Stop counting too soon and everything will fall apart. Eventually though, you'll be comfortable enough to where your voice goes away and you begin to feel the rhythmic pulse internally. I know when I'm practicing and that happens, my new idea has settled and I have good control over it. That's always the goal.

I hope you've enjoyed these two articles on the "Game Changers" that had a huge impact on my drumming. I feel they will do the same for you. Everyone's path to learning is different. The goal is to obtain as much skill as possible as we grow. The main thing is to enjoy this never-ending journey. Good luck!

Check out Billy's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

Sound Design Part 1

By Tony Verderosa

Sound Design is essential in the fields of musical instrument development, live performance, video game development, music production, theater, new media, post-production, virtual reality/augmented reality and of course, filmmaking and television production. Most of you probably think of sound design in the context of epic film trailers and blockbuster Hollywood films. Directors use sound design to enhance and elevate storytelling by carefully choosing sounds that create atmosphere, impact, and emotion.

In this month's column, we will examine why sound design is relevant and vital to the evolution of Creative Percussion Controllers and Hybrid Drumming. We will narrow the focus and examine sound design through the lens of music production and musical instrument development. Sound design in this multi-part series refers to the intentional blending, sculpting, and processing of various organic and synthetic tones. This is quite different and separate from analyzing the melodies and rhythms being played in a music composition. Our primary focus will be with "processed sound" rather than music, though in the world of modern music production and modern film scores, those lines are easily blurred. A good example of this can be found in the audio track below.

"Lock On Target" is a sound cue I created that, upon first listen feels like a strange synthesizer patch but it also has rhythmic, "stuttering" elements, plus evolving pitch shifting components. I want to draw your attention to this sound because it could function as a "sound effect" in a sci-fi movie like *Dune* and it could also function well musically as a film score cue. This is a great example of "blurring the lines" between music and sound design. You might be surprised to find out that this track was created using a frame drum and a rubber gong mallet as my only source material. I will provide a video link further on in this article to take you through the process of transforming the sound of a frame drum using sound design.

Composer Dave Porter who created the score for the hit series *Breaking Bad* is a master at merging sound design with music composition. If you listen to music by artists like FKA Twigs, Tomat, Son Lux, Louis Cole, Rival Consoles, Death Grips, Gold Panda, Moderat, Shigeto and dozens of others, it should be immediately apparent that they are spending a great deal of time crafting unique sounds to bring their music to life. Deliberate, creative sound sculpting is at the core of what they do.

There are many different paths one could take to arrive at original sound design. These include, but are not limited to, the use of additive or subtractive synthesis, processing recorded source material with hardware effects pedals, and manipulating source material in a computer based digital audio workstation such as Logic, Pro Tools, or Cubase.

In this part of this series, we will explore the use of widely available, computer-based FX Plugins inside a DAW as a method of creating unique soundscapes. Before we dive into DAW based "sound manipulation", let's discuss some historical context for sound design. "Sound Effects" have been in use since prehistoric times to convey various emotions. It was used in recreation as well as religious healing practices. Plays and Theatrical performances dating back to medieval times combined music and sound effects to elevate performances.

Luigi Russolo, the Italian composer, built a mechanical sound design device called the "intonarumori" which was used in experimental theater production starting around 1913 to bring different sound effects to a live stage performance. You can see and hear his devices on the YouTube link below.

Luigi Russolo, Intonarumoris, 1913
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYPXAo1cOA4

Russolo was part of the "futurism" movement which focused on the relationship between man and machines. The Dadaist movement started around the spring of 1916 in Europe and was greatly influenced by the futurists. "Dada" was sometimes known as the "anti-art" movement. They sought freedom from previous restrictions imposed on the arts. Dadaism was a rebellion against popular western musical sensibilities. Eric Satie used simple folk music elements and Marcel Duchamp created the concept of "found art". His controversial "found objects" were assembled as "constructions" and displayed in art galleries. For Dadaists, noise from everyday life was often integrated and used as a compositional device. Composers like John Cage and Edgar Varese were also pushing the boundaries of what was considered music.

John Cage - A Book of Music (1944)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O--VJ5BH2u8

John Cage - Dream (1948)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hVFCmK6GgM

Edgard Varese - Complete Works of Edgard Varese, Volume 1 (1951) FULL ALBUM
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEtuTzdCr6s

Developments in mechanics and electricity combined with research in acoustics gave rise to the early electro-mechanical instruments. Inventor Thaddeus Cahill developed the Telharmonium which some consider the very first "synthesizer."

The First Synth Was Bigger Than Your House - The Telharmonium
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lVtk5bLqt4

In the 1920s the Theremin was designed and played without being touched. Leon Theremin designed an instrument that would respond to your hands being waved in between two antennae. Theremin also invented the Rhythmicon in 1931 which was used by composer Edgar Varese. This was essentially an early version of the modern drum machine.

Leon Theremin playing his own instrument
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5qf9O6c20o

In the 1940s and 1950s, broadcasting equipment, test equipment and magnetic tape recorders became key components in early electronic music compositions. John Cage composed a series called "Imaginary Landscapes" which combined live instruments with oscillator test tones played using vinyl records. The Cologne Station of West German Radio was founded in 1952 and this became the studio used by Herbert Eimert and Karlheinz Stockhausen. They manipulated found sounds by purely electronic means. They called their "studies," "Elektronishe Musik".

"Musique Concrete" was also developed during this period by Engineer Pierre Schaeffer and composer, Pierre Henry. They used "found sounds", industrial noises from everyday life, and sounds from vinyl records. Musique Concrete relied heavily on Magnetic Tape to process sounds. These various sonic materials were layered and manipulated using various recording techniques such as filtering, sound splitting, magnetic tape speed manipulation, elongating sounds using reverb or repetition, tape splicing and other mix techniques.

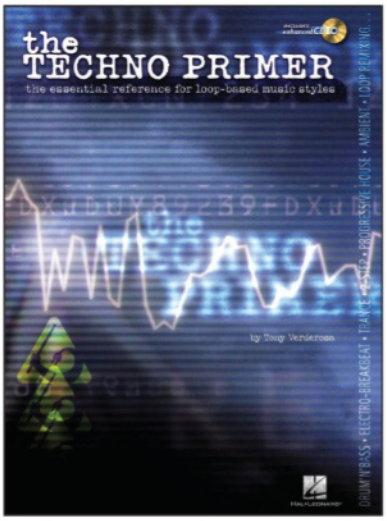
Stockhausen - Studie 1 (1953)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4QaMwpVXVM

Pierre Schaeffer — Le Trièdre Fertile (1978) [Full album, 2012 Reissue]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHudu1Am6oQ

Karlheinz Stockhausen: Telemusik (1966)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdIe2CrorMM

Pierre Schaeffer - Apostrophe
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2o9VyuJSD4

Today's music producers and composers owe a lot to these early pioneers. Manipulating recorded source material such as drums, guitars, vocals and pre-recorded found sounds is very common in modern music production. We have an amazing advantage over the early pioneers because we can utilize MIDI and digital audio technology, which started in the 1980s and 1990s. If you want to do a much deeper dive into the history of electronic music and the early pioneers, you can check out my book, *The Techno Primer*: *Essential reference for loop-based music styles,* published by Hal Leonard.



The influence of computers in the world of sound design cannot be overstated. Digital audio workstations (DAWs) offer a variety of signal processing algorithms known as FX Plug Ins, plus a wide range of delays, filters, EQ's and much more. You can take advantage of all these technologies whether you are using a laptop, iPad, iPhone, or a larger format computer (Mac or PC).

I create custom sound samples that are used in feature films, TV shows, and global advertising campaigns. I use sound design extensively when I am composing music for my own albums or remixing music for John Petrucci and other artists. I have also used creative sound design techniques to produce special sample libraries that appear in Yamaha electronic drums and keyboards. My sound design and custom sample work usually begins by first recording the raw elements, such as cymbals, percussion, drums, vocals, guitars or "found objects."

When I hear the sound of a beautifully recorded acoustic snare drum or bass drum, I love it, but on some levels, it falls flat for me creatively. This just happens to be the way I "hear" music. I have been influenced over many years, listening to the early music pioneers as well as modern music producers that are experts at bending, warping, and shaping sounds. On some level, the influence of computer manipulated sound has "distorted" and "colored" all our listening preferences. A good case in point, are the many drummers over the past 20 years that are trying to reverse engineer electronic music using acoustic drums. That fact alone has dramatically altered many of the acoustic drums and "drumhead treatments" being manufactured and produced. The range of acoustic "FX cymbals" and cymbal "stax" designed and produced by cymbal companies is even more dramatic. I was fortunate to design an entire series of signature effects cymbals with Sabian years ago. That project was a direct result of trying to blend the worlds of electronic loop-based music with acoustic drums. My experiments with "hybrid drumming" over the years was developed to bring sound design to a live improvised stage performance.

My primary objective as a sound designer, is to try and create a sound that I have never heard before. That is my motivation each

time I sit down behind my drums, synths, and DAW in my personal studio. I have designed a drum set environment that is tightly integrated into my sound design/music production system. My computer, software, digital interface, synths, and microphones are all just as essential as my acoustic kick and snare drum. My drums, synths and percussion are situated directly behind my music desk. That desk holds my computers, monitors, pre-amps, and audio interface. I find it's much easier to use a studio chair on wheels to play drums and compose music, rather than use a drum stool. I just swivel my chair around and I can control my DAW, adjust filters/EQ, apply new FX and then I swivel back around to play more drums, trigger pads, and record new grooves and phrases.

This pursuit of "a new dimension for sound" really gets to the heart of the matter. When I am "in the zone", I am equal parts composer, sound engineer, sound designer, drummer, and music producer, adding character and color to each sound.

*** Whether you use an Alesis or Roland, Yamaha or Sun House trigger systems, I want to encourage you whenever possible to* ***create your own sounds!*** *If you remember one key element from this article, let that be your key take-away. ***

Music instrument companies do an amazing job of getting you up and running, but you should always try to find a way to push further sonically by experimenting with the sounds they provide. Let the samples provided "in the box" serve as a jumping off point. Many electronic percussion instruments have their own built-in effects processors, where you can modify stock sampled sounds. I have had a lot of fun over the years taking ordinary drum and percussion samples and then applying radical tuning ranges to see how this inspires me. As an exercise, take some snare and tom samples or djembe samples and tune them down 2 octaves or more. See if you can create some unusual patterns and beats using these new "sound designed" versions of each stock sample inside your drum module. Many of these modules also offer "user sample memory" where you are invited to store you own sampled sounds. You can capture some amazing raw sounds using your iPhone or iPad and then process these with digital FX.

Let's look at how to transform pre-recorded sounds using widely available digital effects processors on a Mac based DAW. My music system is based around Steinberg Cubase Pro. "Cubase" is my Digital Audio Workstation. You can achieve similar results using Pro Tools or Logic and many other DAWs available today.

Below is a video clip of a rubber gong mallet being applied to a frame drum. The gong mallet produces an unusual sound before we even start the signal processing inside the DAW. As mentioned above, our focus will be sculpting the tone and character of the frame drum inside the DAW to create something unique that might bear little resemblance to the original frame drum recording.

Here is a screen shot of one of my favorite FX plugins called THERMAL. The pre-set shown here is called UNRULY. Thermal is an "Interactive Distortion Plugin" made by OUTPUT. This plugin offers multi-band distortion, band splits and activates crossover filters for

creative frequency control. I use this plugin in the video clip to alter the sound of the frame drum.

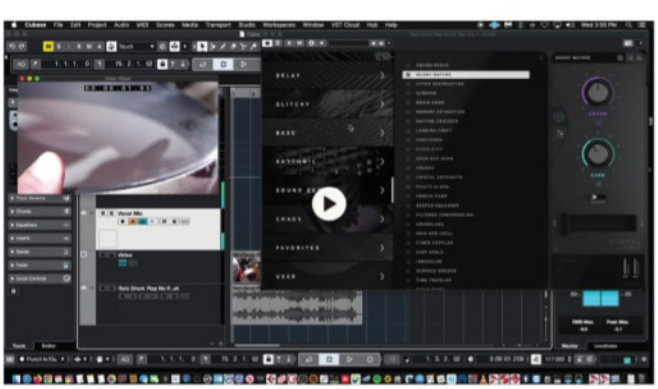
In this video recording/sound design tutorial, I am working inside Steinberg Cubase Pro, which has been my primary music production software for many years. I use Cubase Pro on an iMac Pro. You can download a trial version for free right here: www.steinberg.net/cubase/trial/

I have a second music/sound design workstation in my studio that is based on an iPad. Steinberg also makes an iPad compatible version of Cubase called "Cubasis for iOS". You can also download a free trial version of Cubasis right here: www.steinberg.net/cubasis

I have had amazing results recording percussion and sound effects using the iPad set up. I have a range of different sound design tools on the iPad as well. I like to record new loops and sounds and then upload these to my drobox. Having sounds on my drobox account allows me to download new ideas back onto my iMac Pro to further mix and create new music ideas inside Cubase Pro.

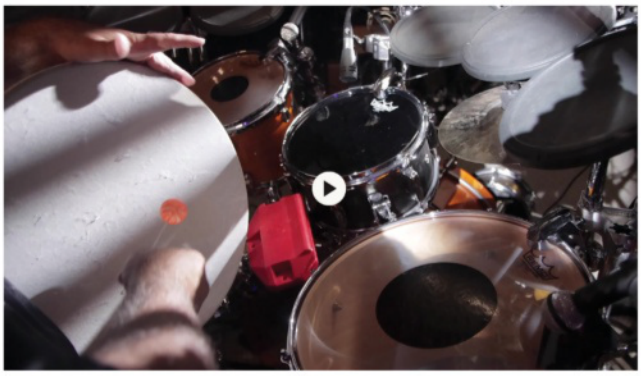
I am also a huge fan of SOUNDTOYS plugins. In this "Frame Drum Transformation Video", I am processing the frame drum by using both SOUNDTOYS and THERMAL to create strange textures. Check out SOUNDTOYS on Instagram. www.instagram.com/soundtoys/?hl=en

In this next video tutorial, I am processing a Rain Drum, focusing on the beads rattling and rolling inside the drum to see how they react to a Granular FX Plugin called PORTAL. PORTAL is also made by OUTPUT. PORTAL allows me to apply granular synthesis to a variety of different sounds. It drastically alters drums, percussion, cymbals, synths, guitars, vocals and any audio signal you want to experiment with. In my video example, you can see how I make use of the "Wet/Dry" blend to achieve some interesting results with the Rain Drum.



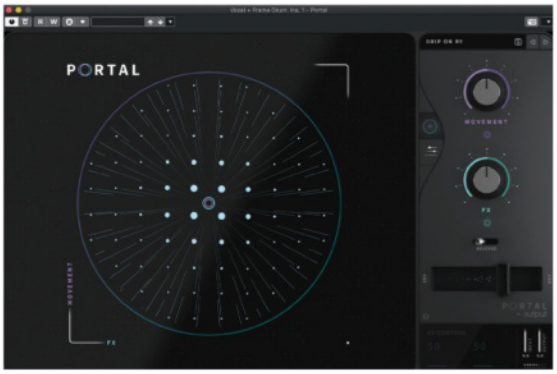
I am also applying several different pre-sets so can hear a range of sound design options. https://output.com/products/portal

Here is a video example using PORTAL FX in real time as well as other FX in real time while improvising on the hybrid drum kit. In this example, I spent some quality time sound designing my own custom samples which I then placed inside a virtual sampler inside Cubase Pro. I am using my DTX trigger Module so that I can assign some of the rubber pads and acoustic drum triggers to my custom samples. I decided to use the rubber gong mallet on the frame drum



as the basis for this groove. You can hear how the custom samples are morphing and changing as I play the grooves. This video clip is an excellent example of merging the world of hybrid drumming/midi triggers with custom sound design.

Here is an audio preview from my new album. This track is called "Operational Camouflage". This is good example of very aggressive sound design and custom samples triggered from acoustic hybrid



drums.

To finish up Part 1 of this new SOUND DESIGN SERIES - Here is a full 8-minute video of an Improvised Film Cue. This track is called "Trisolaran Overlords". I am processing the gongs and drums using delays and other FX plugins in real time. I am triggering different custom synth sounds from the pads and drum triggers. I am also making good use of the Tony Verderosa "Signature V-Wave" effects cymbal by Sabian plus my signature "Distortion Hi-Hats" on the right side of the hybrid Kit.

I hope you enjoyed this Sound Design discussion. If you have any questions, please visit me, and send me comments through my website, www.tonyverderosa.com or follow me on social media/ instagram/facebook/youtube/twitter. "Sound Design Part 2" is coming soon!

Check out Tony's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

Bob Moses' More Musical Resolution Points

In the last several last months of *Modern Drummer* we have included the chapters from Bob Moses' *Drum Wisdom* book on the 8/8 Concept and the Sixteen Musical Resolution Points. These two concepts work together and can apply to every style of music and drumming. We also went into depth regarding the & of 4, the & of 2, and the & of 3 musical resolution points. This month we will continue by talking specifically about the & of 1, and 4. First, you might want to refresh your memory by re-reading the last few month's columns. Here is what Bob has to say about this important concept.

Mastering the Resolution Points

In the following pages we're going to deal with different resolution points individually. To do that effectively, we will work with two-bar phrases. Let's look at the reason for that. The idea behind a resolution point is that it gives you an element of repetition that is necessary for groove. We do not necessarily need something that repeats in every bar, however, because we are not just hitting these points, but rather, we are resolving to them, one bar doesn't really give you enough room to resolve. In order to have enough room to create a resolution, most of the time we're going to want to use at least a two-bar phrase. It could, in fact, be longer than a two-bar phrase, but in this column, we will focus on two-bar phrases because they are so basic and common to music, I feel that it is very valuable to visualize music whenever you can. You should not just hear music but also see it. When working from a resolution point, start by visualizing a two-bar phrase with a grid of 8th notes, which you will use as your framework.

The eight resolution points can be incorporated into very simple time keeping patterns, as well as more complex solo or fill patterns. This month I will be giving some rhythmic examples of phrases which resolve to a specific point. I will not illustrate how to apply those phrases to the drum set, because it is more important that you develop your own ability to do this, rather than memorizing the way I, or anyone else, might do it. Rather than practicing specific exercises, you need to develop your own creativity and your ability to use the resolution points in whatever type of music you are personally involved with. After you feel that you can hold the 8/8 framework in your mind, along with a specific resolution point, start creating your own two-bar phrases which resolve to that point. At first you might want to practice the individual phrases repeatedly, but ultimately you should be able to play a different phrase every two measures with the only common element being the resolution point itself. You can use the following examples as a framework for your playing, filling in around the resolution point in any way you choose. Here are two more resolution points for you to explore.

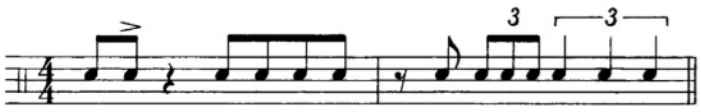
The & of 1 in the First Bar

Visualization

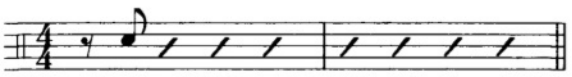
Timekeeping Patterns
Swung Eighths

Straight Eighths

Phrases Resolving to the & of 1 in the First Bar



Framework for Playing



The & of 1 in the Second Bar

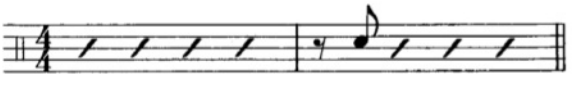
Visualization

Timekeeping Patterns
Swung Eighths

Straight Eighths

Phrases Resolving to the & of 1 in the Second Bar

Framework for Playing



4 in the First Bar

Visualization

Timekeeping Patterns
Swung Eighths

Straight Eighths

Phrases Resolving to 4 in the First Bar

Framework for Playing

4 in the Second Bar

Visualization

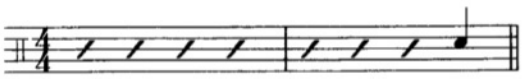
Timekeeping Patterns

Swung Eighths

Straight Eighths

Phrases Resolving to 4 in the Second Bar

Framework For Playing



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Since 1977, Modern Drummer has been the world's foremost community builder and a cutting-edge influence on all things related to drums & drumming. A place where young drummers find and follow their drum heroes, gear manufacturers, educators & retailers while actively participating in the drumming community to share their knowledge.

To grace the pages of Modern Drummer Magazine is a coveted achievement that even the most iconic musicians hold in highest regard. Modern Drummer is the heartbeat and center of the drumming community.

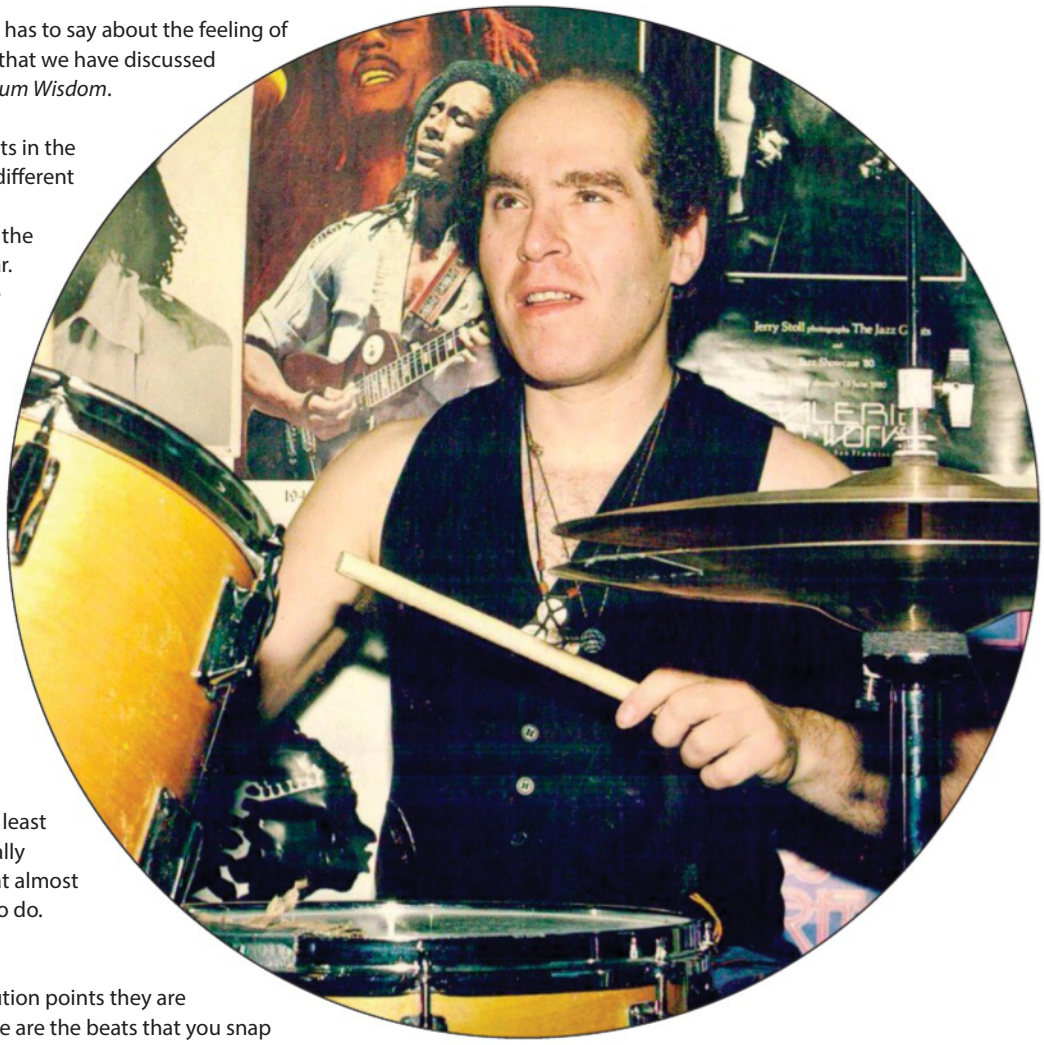
Now Modern Drummer is expanding our community for drummers, fans, beat-makers, music creators, NFT collectors, and yes, even gamers!

It's called the **Modern Drummer Club** (MDC) and begins with our Discord at https://discord.gg/drums. The MDC Discord channel is a place to talk drums, learn & collaborate with others, share ideas, and provide musical feedback.

The club represents Modern Drummer's foray into Web3 with a membership token that enables members to participate and be privy to the latest Modern Drummer **NFT** drops, contests, games, meet & greets, and rare live drum experiences.

To learn more and join the conversation, join the Discord and follow us on Twitter at https://twitter.com/drumsnft

To conclude, here is what Bob has to say about the feeling of the musical resolution points that we have discussed in this and past excerpts of *Drum Wisdom*.



Although there are eight points in the bar, there are really only four different feelings. Although there is a difference between the 1 and the 3, these points feel very similar. Likewise, the 2 and the 4 have a similar feeling, as do the & of 1 and the & of 3, and the & of 2 and the & of 4. I have given you a methodology for working on each of the eight points, but because of the similarity of feeling, I am going to discuss them in groups of two.

1 and 3

To me, the 1 and 3 are anchors. They tend to stop forward motion, almost like putting a stake in the ground. They tend to give a feeling of reaching the end, and for that reason I tend to use these the least of all resolution points. Ironically enough, they are the ones that almost everybody seems to be able to do.

2 and 4

These are very valuable resolution points they are where the swing resides. These are the beats that you snap your fingers on, or clap your hands to. these are the beats that make it swing, and resolving on these beats is very effective.

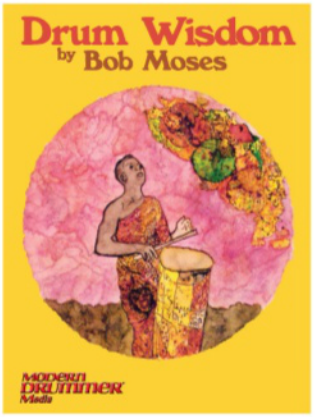
The & of 1 and the & of 3

To me, these feel like an elbow in the ribs; they have kind of a jerky feeling that wakes you up. They also remind me of a contraction; They have a pulling in kind of motion, they are very effective because they tend to propel the music.

The & of 2 and the & of 4

These are the opposite of the previous feeling; They are like an expansion rather than a contraction. They are a stretching, a leaning forward. There is a famous Miles Davis composition called "Four" that is based on the & of 2 and the & of 4.

If I had to pick one point that is the most important, I would pick the & of 4, but again I stress: **Don't skip any of them. They are all important!**

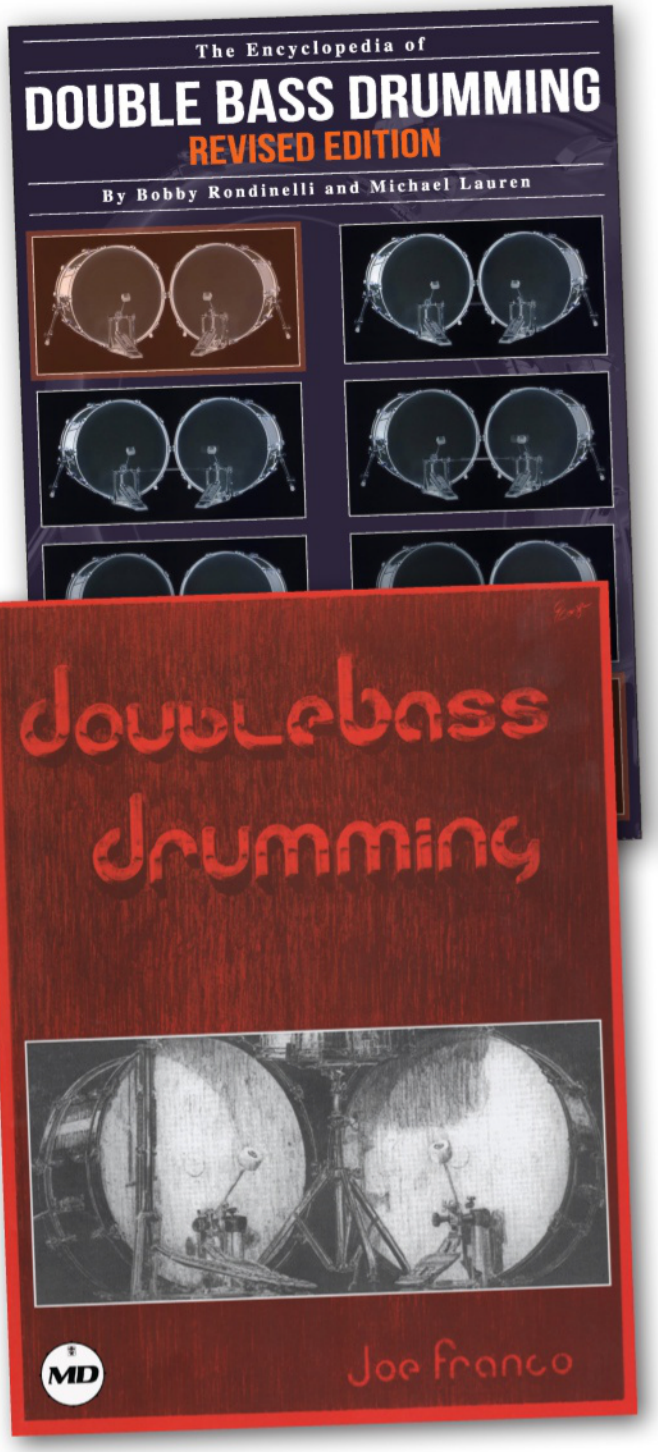


Check out Bob's *Modern Drummer* profile page and get your copy of *Drum Wisdom* at moderndrummer.com

MODERN DRUMMER Media Presents:

Lessons From The Greats

Double Bass Drumming



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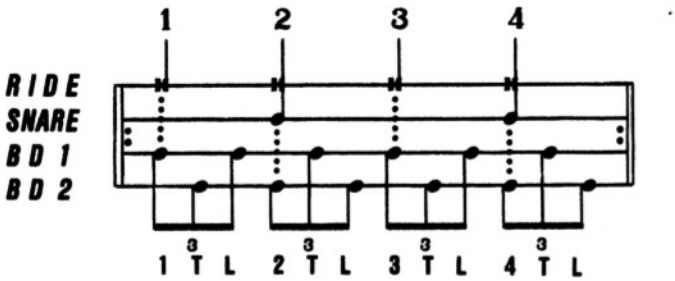
Double Bass Drumming

by Joe Franco

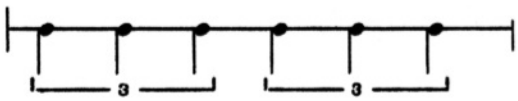
This month *Modern Drummer* will continue our re-introduction of Joe Franco's classic book *Double Bass Drumming,* and his concept called the **Single Stroke System**. Here is Joe's chapter on **Eighth Note Triplet Double Bass Patterns.** There are many more patterns and beats included in this outstanding book.

Eighth Note Triplet Patterns

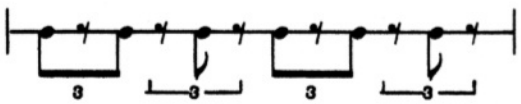
In this section, patterns using eighth note triplets are broken up between the two bass drums. They are played together with a quarter note RIDE and the SNARE on 2 and 4 to form beats. The following beat illustrates the eighth note triplet double bass roll:



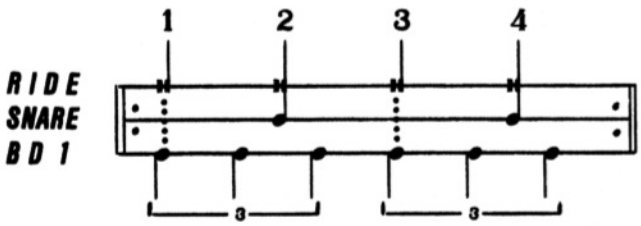
When playing the eighth note triplet double bass roll, BD 1 plays two quarter note triplets per measure of 4/4:



Which can be broken down to:

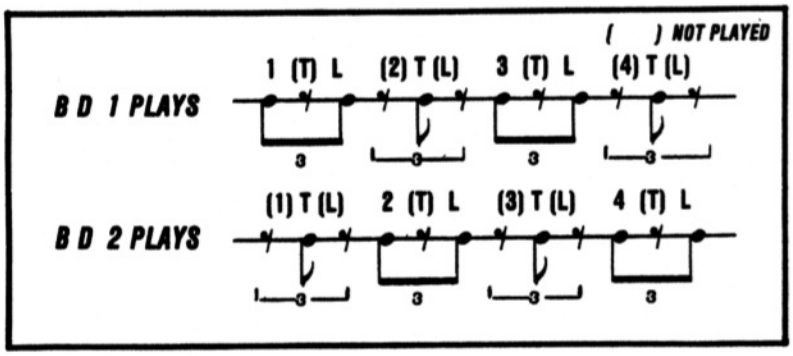


In the following beat BD 1 is played together with the RIDE and SNARE:



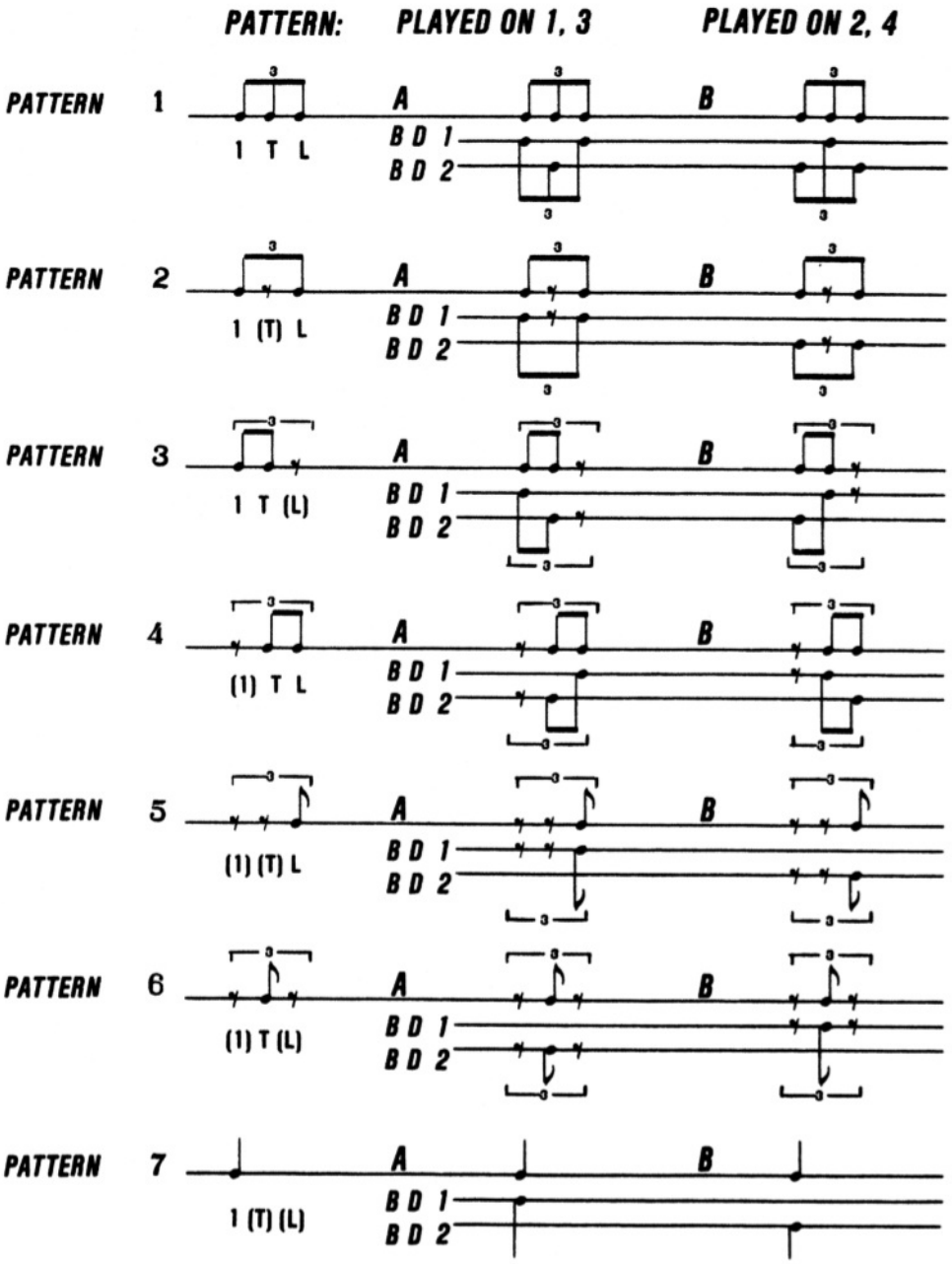
When played together over a complete measure of 4/4, BD 1 plays six notes while the ride plays four. This is known as 6 : 4 (6 against 4 polyrhythm.) The RIDE and BD 1 both fall together on 1 and 3. Keep in mind that the two quarter note triplets on BD 1 are six notes of equal duration. They are evenly spaced throughout the measure. By playing BD 2 between the notes of BD 1 the eighth note triplet roll is formed. The RIDE, SNARE, and BD 2 all fall together on 2 and 4.

Practice playing both of the above beats. Again, the more familiar you are with playing the continuous roll the easier it will be to play the broken patterns in the section. Using the **Single Stroke System**, eighth note triplet patterns are broken up between the two bass drums as follows:

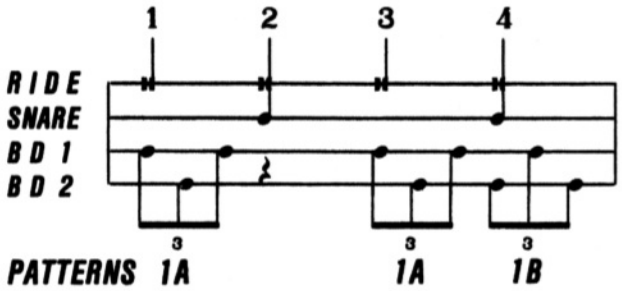


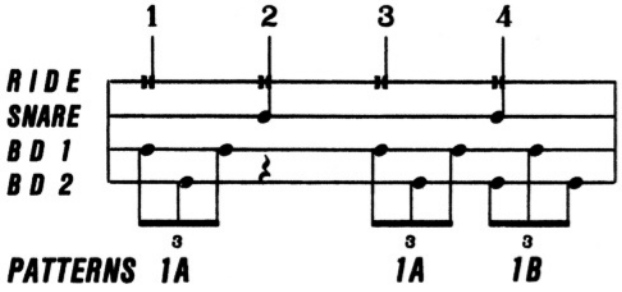
The eighth note triplet role differs from the 16th note role in that the main bass drum (BD 1) will fall on every other beat (1 and 3.) Therefore, a one beat eighth note triplet pattern will be played one way (A) if it falls on 1 or 3, and the opposite way (B) if it falls on 2 or 4. Both A and B are illustrated in the triplet patterns that follow:

Eighth Note Triplet Patterns

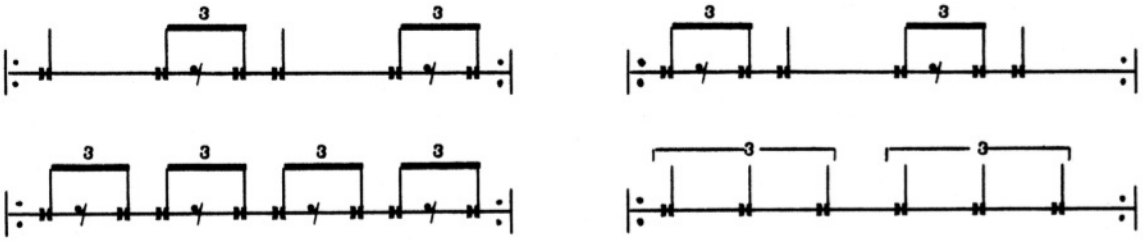


Here are some examples of beats using eighth note triplet bass drum patterns:

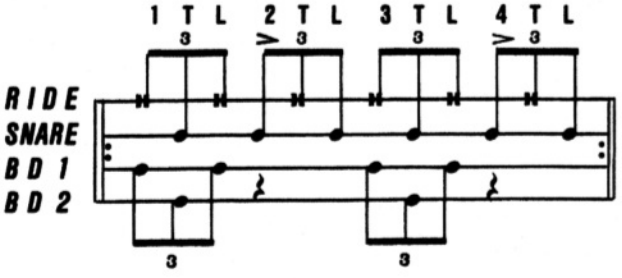


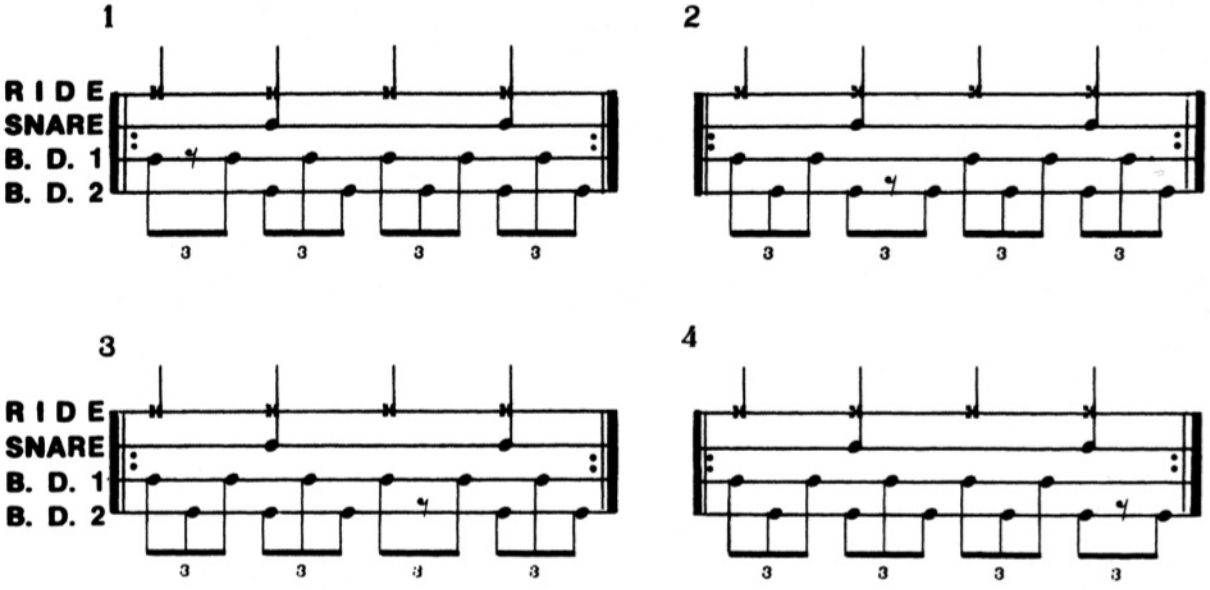


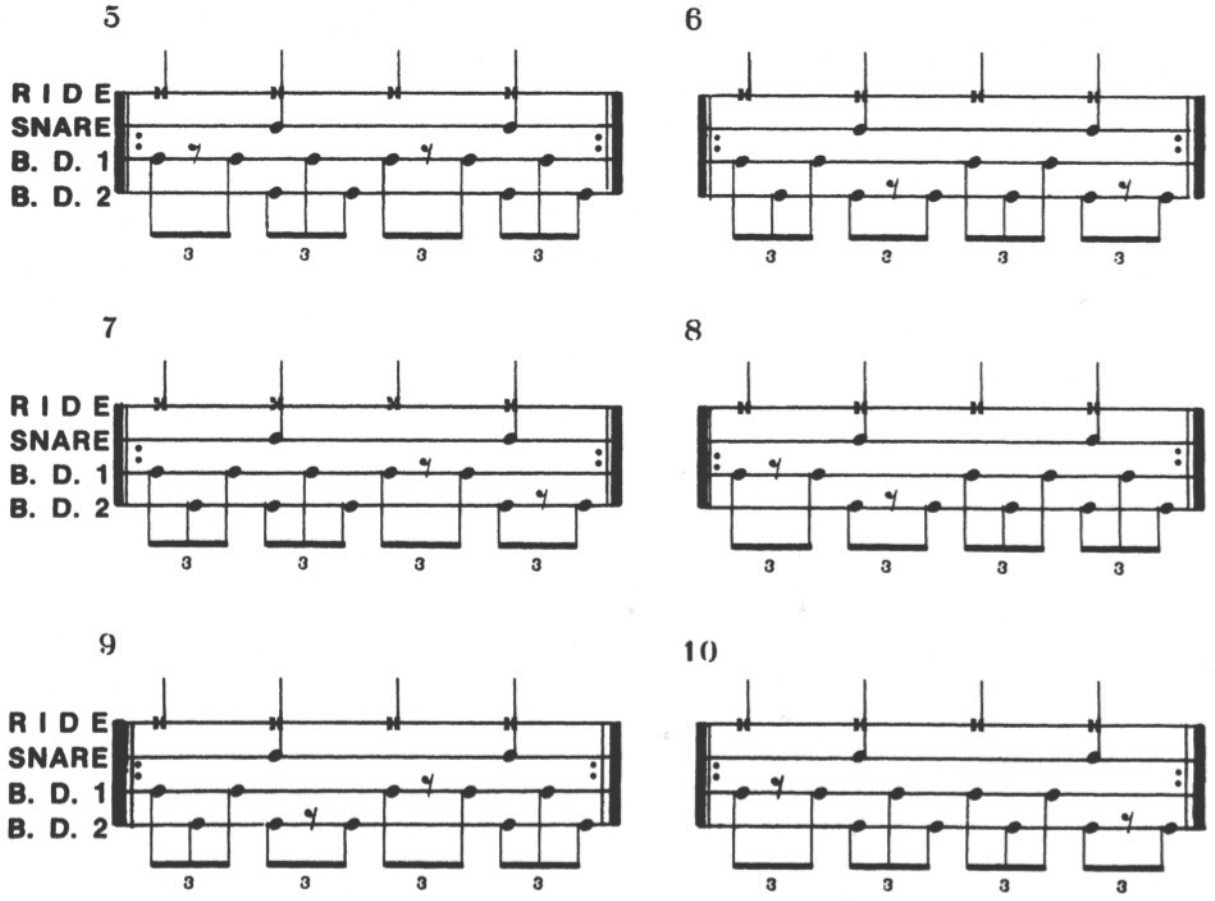
The beats in this section are written with a quarter note RIDE. Here are some suggestions for other RIDE patterns:

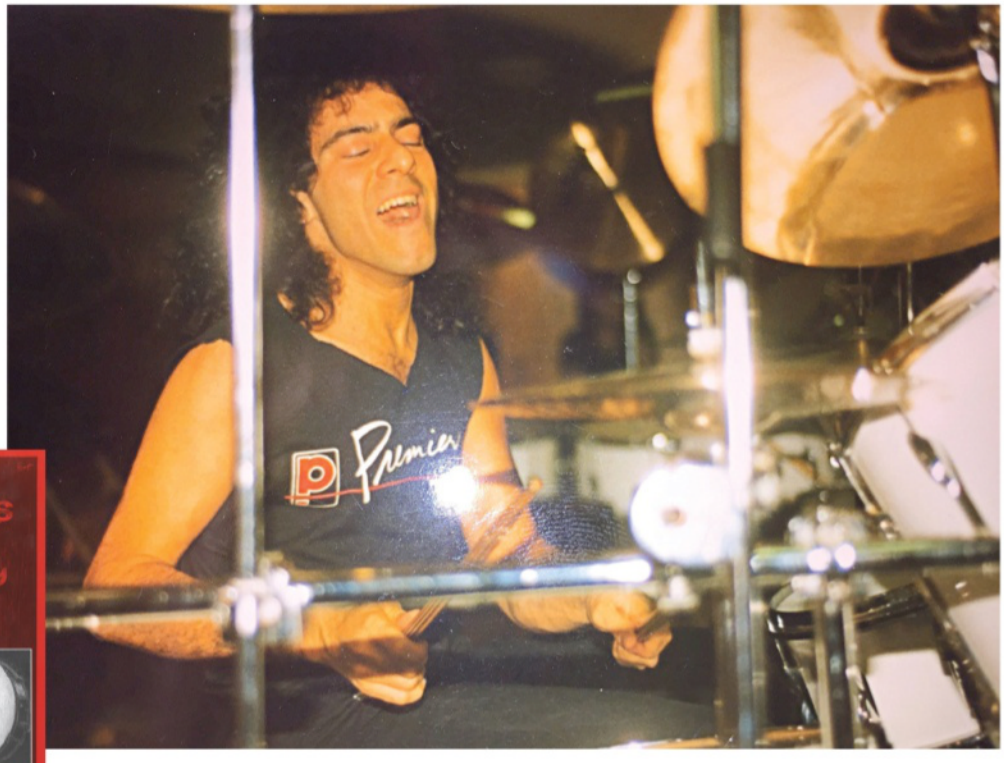


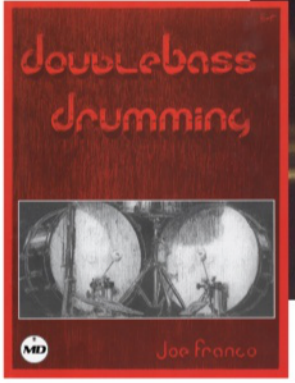
As with the sixteenth note beats, most of the bass drum patterns in this section are designed around a 2 and 4 snare pattern. Any triplet hand pattern with a snare accent on the 2 and 4 can be played with these bass drum patterns. For example, the single stroke roll (RLR - LRL - RLR – LRL) with R playing the RIDE and L playing the SNARE.











Check out Joe's *Modern Drummer* profile page and get your copy of *Double Bass Drumming* at moderndrummer.com

Realistic 7/8 time

This year *Modern Drummer* has been celebrating the 50th anniversary of Carmine Appice's groundbreaking book, *Ultimate Realistic Rock*. In the last few months, we have included Carmine's beats based around quarter notes, eighth notes, accented bass drum notes, and sixteenth notes. In the next few months we will print some excerpts from the more advanced sections of the book.

This month we will include an excerpt from Carmine's section on playing in the 7/8 time signature. This is one of the sections that was added to the new *Ultimate Realistic Rock*. As you will see, in the new odd time section of the book, Carmine makes playing in odd times as easy as playing in 4/4. Odd time signatures are no longer a challenge.

Realistic Rock 7/8 timing

Welcome to the odd time signatures of Realistic Rock. In this section we will learn how to play in the 7/8 time signature.

In 4/4 we have eight eighth notes in one bar and in 7/8 we have seven eighth notes in one bar.

Counting out loud and repeating each count will only increase your ability to feel natural with these odd time signatures. Once comfortable, each downbeat will be easily anticipated as if you were playing in 4/4. Emphasizing the one of each count with your bass drum will speed up the process!

The count is simple: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, sev.** Saying **SEV** instead of seven makes it easier to count, so that all the counts are one syllable.

Remember count over and over **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, sev; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, sev,** etc.

It is important to note that 7/8 grooves will change the note values in relation to 4/4.

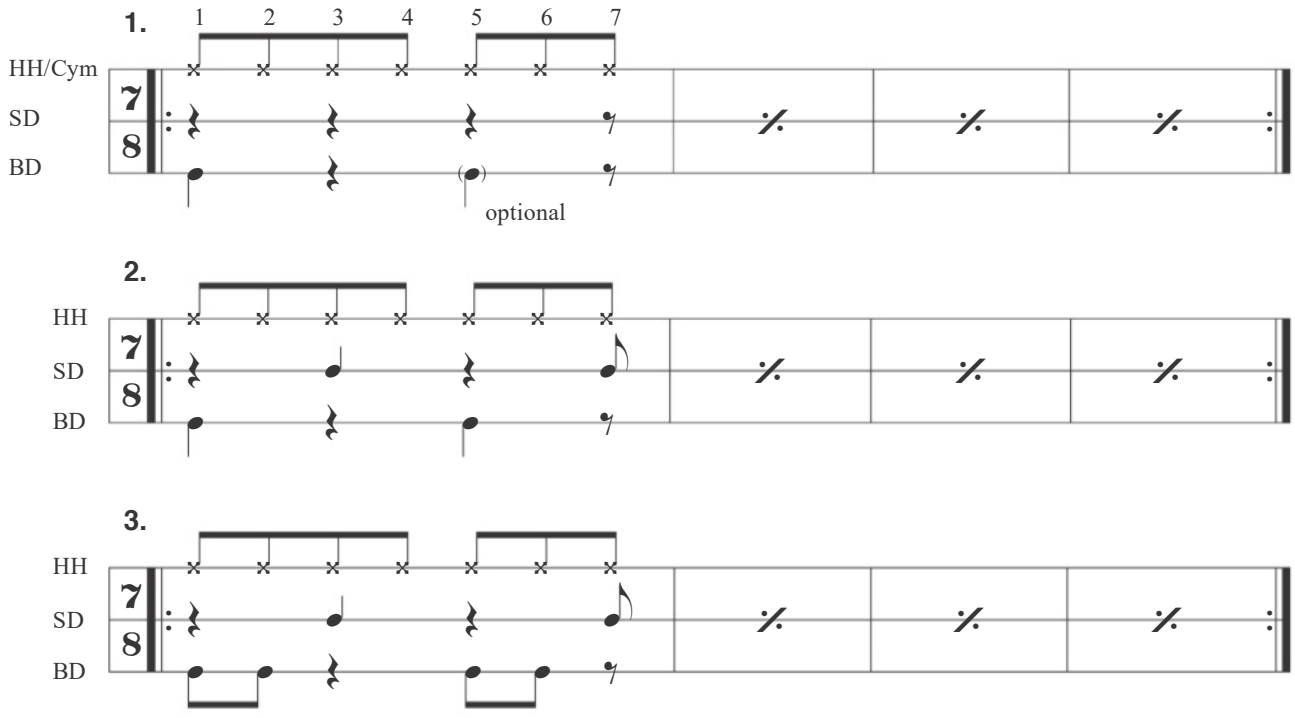
Example:
Eighth notes = one beat
Sixteenth notes = half a beat
Eighth notes are now counted **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, sev.**
Sixteenth notes are now counted **1 &, 2 &, 3 &, 4 &, 5 &, 6 &, 7 &,** etc.
Sixteenth note triplets are now counted **1 & a, 2 & a, 3 &a , 4 & a, 5 &a, 6 & a, 7 & a,** etc

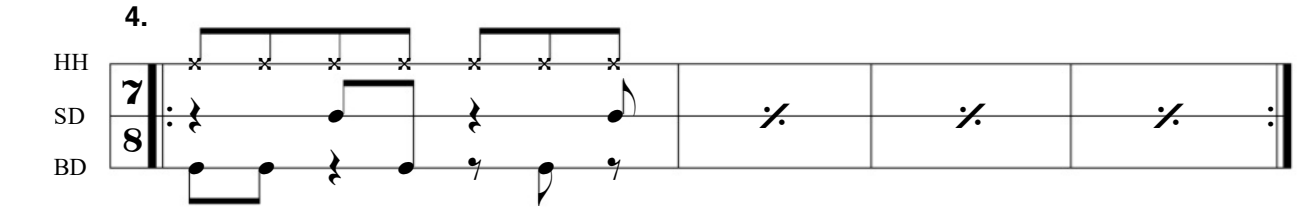
In order to make each exercise easier to read, think of them as bars of 4/4 stopping where the & of four should be. We now think of the & of 4 as beat 1. In other words, in 7/8 we cut off the last eighth note of the 4/4 bar.

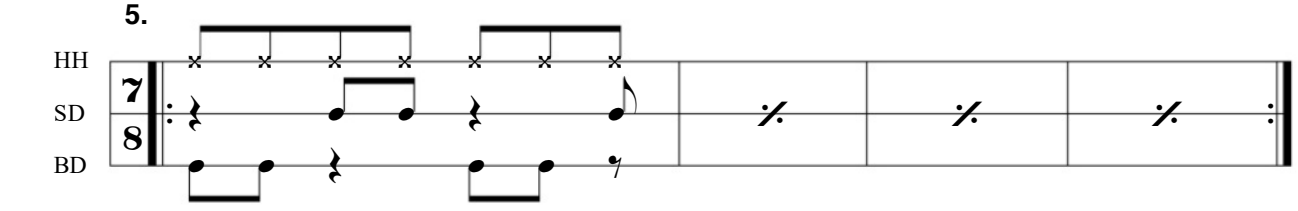
Count **1 &, 2 &, 3 &, 4, 1 &, 2 &, 3 &, 4** etc. There is **no space** between 4 and 1 when counting. As previously mentioned, emphasize the count of 1 (the downbeat) with your bass drum in order to feel comfortable with 7/8 times signature.

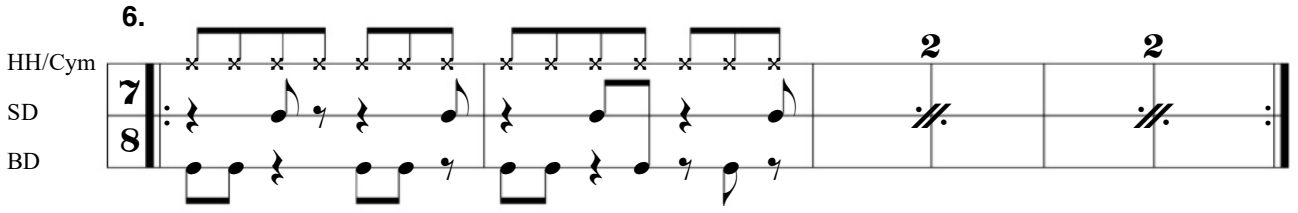
Good luck! Now go to Ex. 1 One and have some fun.

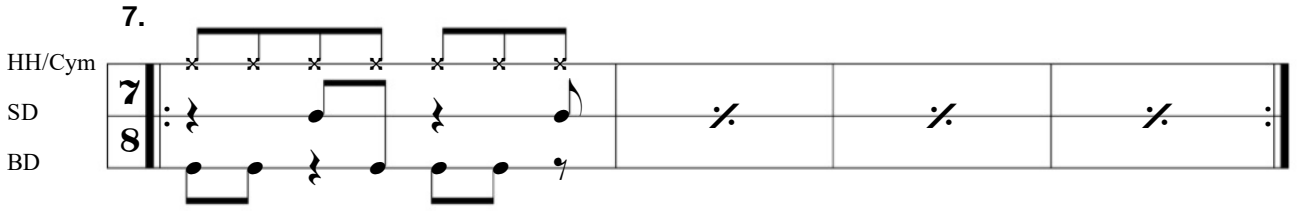
Realistic 7/8 Time—Eighth Notes

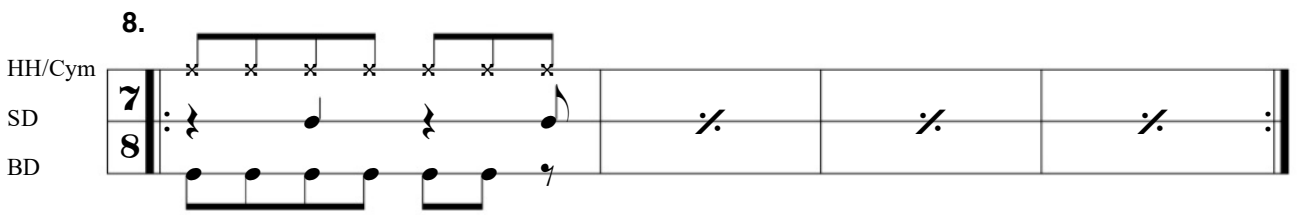




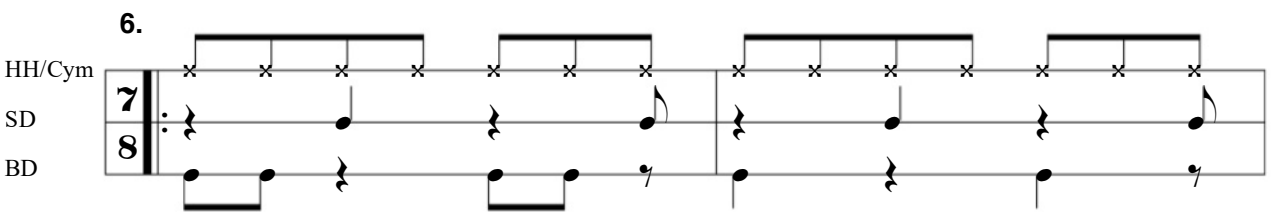


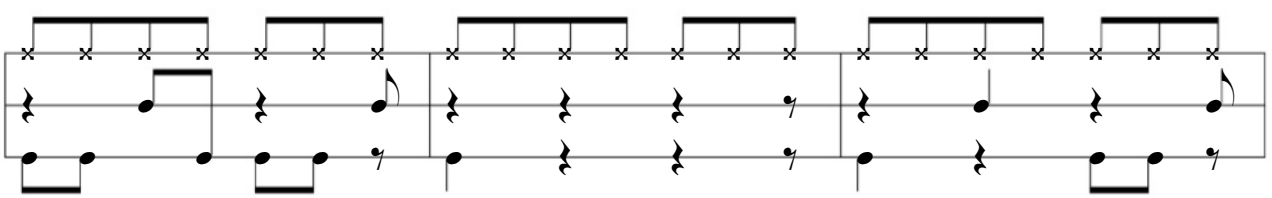


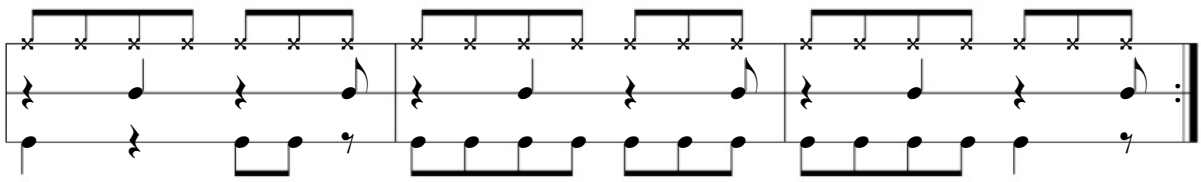




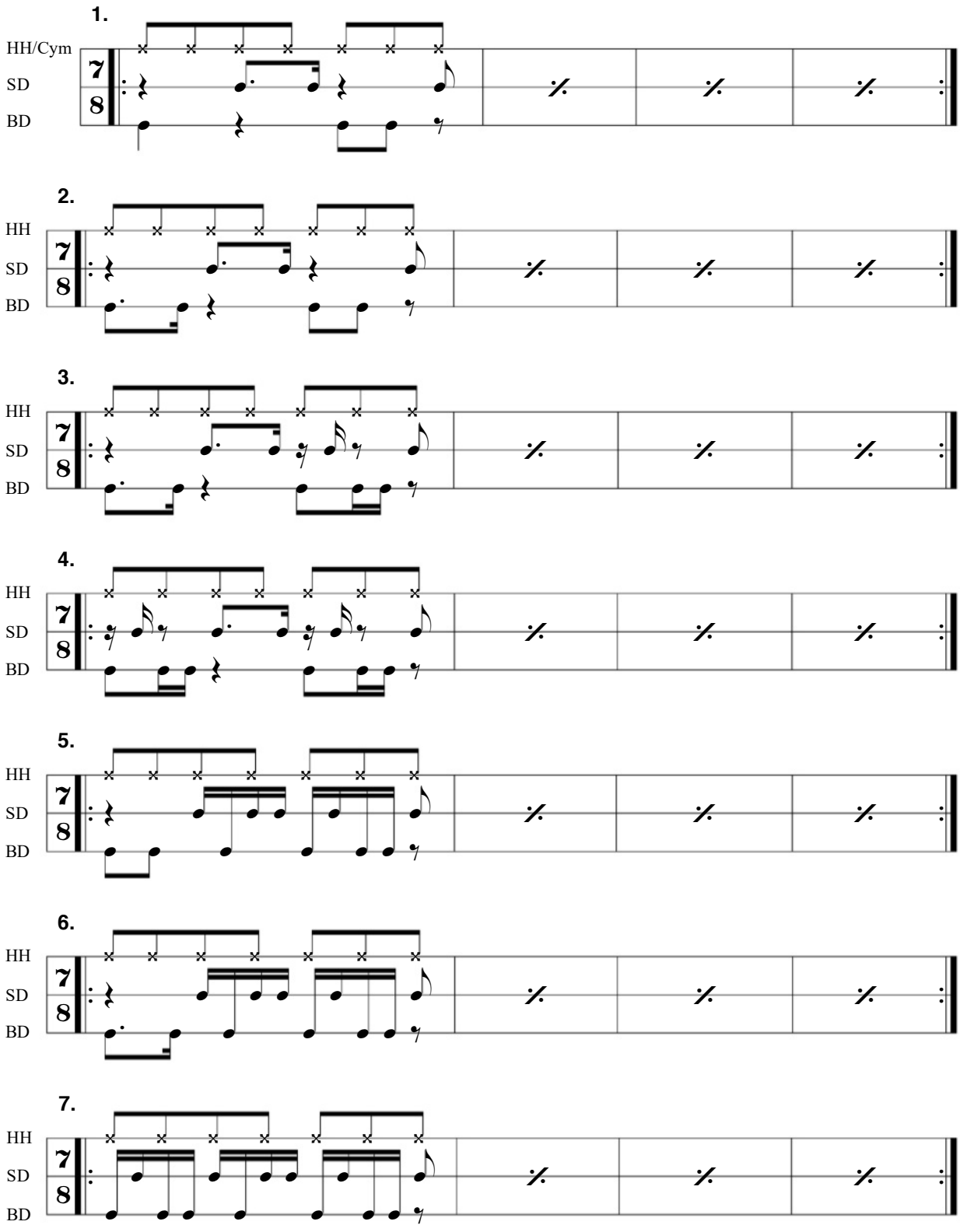
Eight-Bar Exercise



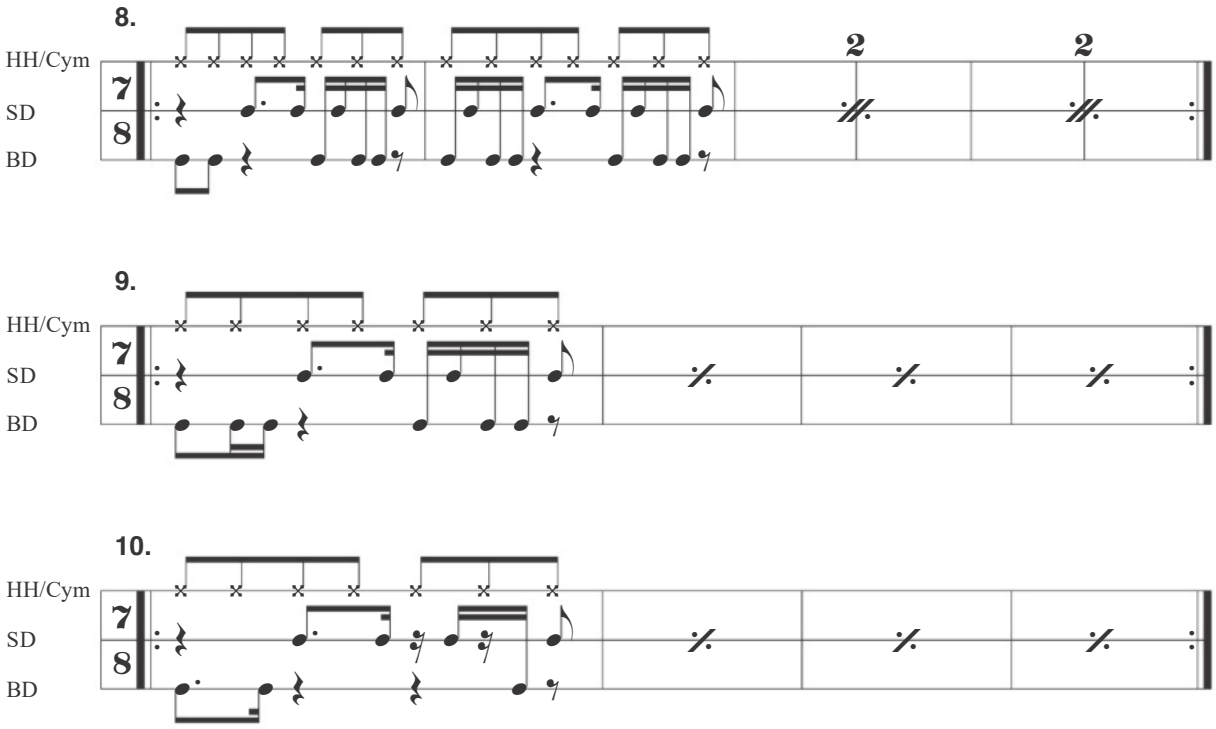




Realistic 7/8 Time—Sixteenth Notes



7/8 Time—Sixteenth Notes



Eight-Bar Exercise

Check out Carmine's *Modern Drummer* profile page and his book collection at moderndrummer.com

Dan Mayo: Breaking the Norm of How Drums Sound

By Raghav Mehrotra

Ariel Efron

Dan Mayo is the definition of unique, in the best way possible. He started his musical journey at the age of three, and by the time he was six, Dan was exposed to (arguably) the best form of learning, playing with other musicians. He went from genre to genre absorbing all the information he could while performing in his home city of Tel Aviv, Israel. That was where he was exposed to many different musical cultures.

Since then, Mayo has been curating a unique sound that is unmistakably him. He combines his drums with guitar effects pedals to present the instrument in a totally new light. This unmistakable sound can be heard on recordings with his band TATRAN and performing with artists such as Ester Rada at major festivals such as the Montreux Jazz Festival, Atlanta Jazz Festival, and the Rotterdam Jazz Festival. In this interview, we dive into how Dan's musical influences have shaped his approach to understanding music and creating his sound, as well as the intricacies behind his creative process.

MD: What drew you to drumming?
DM: To be honest, I don't know! I was surrounded by music from a young age; that's the best way to say it. My cousins are musicians, so I grew up in rehearsal rooms and constantly saw musicians coming in and out to practice and perform. On a deeper level, I feel as though drums are the easiest method I can employ to express myself. I sometimes have a hard time expressing myself with words, not just in English but in Hebrew (which is another language I speak.) However, when I play, everything clears up—it's like a native language to me.
MD: Are there any specific records that you listened to that helped you *discover* drums?
DM: My father listened to a lot of classic rock bands when I was growing up—stuff like Rush and Led Zeppelin. From there I discovered James Brown and other funk artists. Actually, now that I think about it, before discovering funk, I listened to a lot of prog-metal bands like System of a Down. Then I followed the lineage of funk musicians back to jazz, however I remember *hating* jazz at first.
MD: I'm curious about your opposition to jazz…
DM: I think my opposition to jazz stemmed from the *aura* that my teachers in high school placed around it. They would always tell me how great and revolutionary jazz was and how I "had to love it," but because of that forced nature, it never really stuck. However, I remember walking to a CD store later to get some prog-metal records and coming across Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. It was a surreal experience listening to them…I loved it.
MD: Did you follow your ears when searching for these influences, or did you have some formal training?
DM: Well, I wasn't exactly the best student. The school that I was enrolled in was arts-centric, they gave us the choice to concentrate in one of three artistic disciplines: dancing, visual art (such as painting), and music. Of course, I chose music. Through that program, I was lucky enough to have a wide array of experiences *playing* with other musicians. I feel as though my biggest lessons came through those experiences. Those experiences taught me how musicians communicate. When you can communicate through your music, that's when you know you are getting better. That communication can occur through musical ideas or even something like *proper tone*.
MD: Did you start to gravitate towards different styles of music as you learned to communicate spontaneously through music?
DM: You can definitely say that, yes. In addition to an increased appreciation for improv-based styles of music, I was able to dip my feet in MANY different musical cultures. Growing up in Israel also contributed to that appreciation. Israel is composed of many different cultures of music. I was playing everything from Ethiopian music, to Moroccan music, to straight-ahead jazz (Israel has a great jazz scene!) It was life changing!

In a sense, going back to your previous question, for me, the best teacher was playing with all of those different musicians. Our

common bond wasn't our culture, it was (instead) our love for the music that we were playing. That enabled us to exchange many different ideas.

MD: What musical ideas have you picked up from your experiences that you have found particularly helpful or intriguing?

DM: Two main ideas come to mind: The first one comes from Yemini music; it's called a Daasah. It's in seven and it's super groovy, it's almost like playing funk. Through Daasah I learned the power of inner clave—when you dance to it and feel it in your bones, you can really do whatever you want with it! That taught me how to be free and instilled the 'physical' part of music in me, *dancing*. I found the second idea in Ethiopian music. That music has more of a 6-6-4 kind of rhythm. That taught me to NOT play the kick drum on every quarter note and aided the development of my internal rhythmic pulse. To me, both styles are great principles of how to be more "unique" and "free" in the grooves that I play, while still keeping the inherent "skeleton" of the style. I learned that the placement of any extraneous notes and where they should go, is up to me.

MD: How do you decide where those notes should go?

DM: It's definitely a feel thing for me. A lot of the stuff I play is reactive and impulsive. If it doesn't feel right, what's its emotional value to the music?

MD: Talk to us about your work with guitar pedals and drums.

DM: I've always liked weird sounds. When I practice my real focus is to make the drums SOUND good. My philosophy is that if I can sound "right," the technique will ultimately come. This is instead of me having to bend my ideal sound to fit the "correct" technique.

During Covid, I was eager to start filming and recording myself; I don't know why, it just happened. And after a while of recording my drums, I found myself wanting a sound that was just…different. I just decided to plug in a guitar pedal that I had lying around. The pedal was called the Fusionbox by Eric Synths—and I loved the sound. Then I just started adding more pedals. Offir Benjaminov, the bassist from my band TATRAN, gave me a pedal. One of my first distortion pedals was the Tremstrotion by Mattoverse. That is a tremolo and a barbaric distortion in one pedal—it sounds ridiculous on drums, *like a punk teenage boy that's looking for trouble.* Each pedal that I added opened new possibilities for what sounds I could get out of the drums and HOW I played them.

I have to give a shout out to Anto Nota from Deaftone, he helped me a LOT! He created the wiring on my pedalboard and built three of my most frequently used pedals: Bruut (RAT clone,) The Unknown (crazy synth fuzz,) and a spring box pedal, which essentially, just makes a lot of noise (the way I like it!) Again, I practice drums seeking new sounds. So for me, those pedals were just frankly the next inevitable thing. It's just so much fun to just discover through that medium!

MD: How does your playing differ when you're playing with a pedalboard versus playing with only acoustic drums?

DM: Great question! It's all about working out a balance with my ears. Usually, I take three factors into account: the gain staging, how hard I'm hitting the drums, and the density of my phrases. For example, if I have a delay pedal on my drums, playing very dense phrases is just going to clutter up what's coming from the pedal. With high gain staging, I can use the pedal almost as a second instrument. I can actually interact with the effect. I can let my notes breathe and let the settings on the pedal do the work when I'm not playing. In a way, the sounds created by the pedal in the final mix make up for when I'm not playing. I've also found that the way I mic the drums is important. With a dynamic microphone, I was getting some sound from the pedal, but the pedal was not able to interact with my drums unless I was bashing. With a ribbon mic, which makes a figure-eight pattern, I am able to capture everything. Everything from the high end of the toys and the cymbals to the low frequencies of the kick drum, it was truly game changing. Mic'ing with a ribbon microphone helped me discover the "ducking" effect that I am able to get when I slam the kick drum and let it breathe. The feedback that I create with the pedals is able to squeeze between the kick drum notes. That creates a certain tension and release that I love.

Ariel Efron

MD: I love your fearlessness and intuitive drive. Given that, how do you further develop your playing with effects pedals? Essentially, how does one know they're getting "better" when they are playing with such an incredibly subjective medium? A medium that may be

even more subjective than playing drums?

DM: I'm just chasing after what feels *right* to me. Presently, in my body, it feels *right*. When I used to practice as a kid, I'd imagine a huge crowd in front of me. When you get the rush of that performance, you learn how to play an interesting story. You learn to say something that is *meaningful* and feels *right*. Today, if I'm getting the feeling that I want to just take off my shirt and scream (in a good way,) I know I'm making a positive emotional impact on myself, and thus, to the crowd in front of me.

MD: That's a perfect way to put it. That energy is present in your videos online and it permeates the audience.

DM: In a lot of the videos that you see online, I'm either just opening a pedal or just starting to play with it. That magical feeling I get when that burst of creativity washes over me is exactly what you see online. Social media, for me, is just the place to share what I've been discovering with the people that are willing to listen.

MD: I know the gear you use is a big part of your sound, tell us about all the unique instruments you have!

DM: All the gear I use emulates what I want to hear, *perfectly*. Put bluntly, it's a bunch of weird stuff that makes all the unique sounds I hear in my head come to life.

Ben Mizrahi

I got drums from A&F about five years ago. I remember my stomach shaking with the depth of the kick sound…it was incredible. I saw that they had 6" snare drums, so I got one and added it to my already eccentric setup. I started putting drums on top of each other and flipping them over, so many new ideas came to mind. I even brought my 6" snare on a rock tour and used it as a main snare. That drum is so versatile! Rami, from A&F, is searching for new sounds all the time, just like me. He was a touring musician before he started the business of making drums. It is so easy to share the excitement of finding a new sound or discovering a new drum making material with him. Not long ago, Rami sent me a kit with a 26" bass drum. That drum vibrates at 20 Hz. It's a testament to the depth of sound that drums can create. Sound guides me. I also use Morfbeats stuff a lot. Adam Morford (the founder) creates these metal pieces that have such cool frequencies, pitches, timbres, and levels of sustain… I almost don't use cymbals anymore!

MONO has also been incredibly supportive of the idea of pedalboards for drums. Not only did they send me a pedalboard to start my journey, but they also sent me a few pedals from Teisco to explore—the Teisco delay pedal is my go-to pedal. It has a very clean and warm sound, it's great for creating space and size.

MD: Tell us about your band, TATRAN. How has the band's sound evolved as you have evolved as a musician?

DM: That's an amazing question because we were just talking about it earlier! Our band is almost 70s driven in a way; not necessarily musically, but in the sense that we play all our music and effects live. On stage, we don't have any computers, tracks, or synthetics. Everything we play is created LIVE. Each of the band members—Tamuz Dekel on guitar, Offir Benjaminov on bass, and me on drums—now have effects pedals. With the addition of my pedal setup, I'm really looking forward to our upcoming album.

When we play, we are all interacting not only *within* our instruments but with each other. That interaction includes with both our pedals *and* our regular instruments! However, the addition of pedals on the drums has created some logistics issues. When intentional effects come through the monitors, the sounds go through the speakers and then back into the mics, that creates this infinite loop of madness. To deal with that I have to adjust the EQ and add gating. I have to suppress the pedal system with my playing a bit until I find the perfect solution.

Personally, I've also learned the value of *NOT* playing a crash cymbal. I noticed that whenever I hit a crash, it's because of an insecurity with what I am playing. That insecurity stems from my struggle to find the "right part" for the song. To fix this, on stage I started waiting a couple of seconds between iterations of a drum part. Essentially, instead of jumping to change a part that I thought wasn't right, I let the part I'm playing marinate with the music before I change it. That process means that when I actually find that *right* part, it's *really* worth it. Also, not adding crashes creates a really cool tension that I can resolve later with some unique combination of sounds that mimic the emotional effect of a crash cymbal.

MD: That concept of crashes masking insecurity is quite intriguing!

DM: Yeah, totally! I noticed that on a gig. The speed at which I have to develop the right parts to keep the audience engaged is quite fast. It has been fun developing the skill to ensure that the full musical value of my different drum parts are heard. I like to let a part shine before I move on…who knows what ideas might stem from it.

Dan Mayo is endorsed by: A&F Drum Company, A&F Hardware, Meinl Cymbals, MONO, Vic Firth, Morfbeats, Mr. Muff, SE electronics, Erica Synths, Jam Pedals, Gamechanger Audio, Deaftone, Teisco, Aston mics, Chase Bliss.

Check out Dan's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

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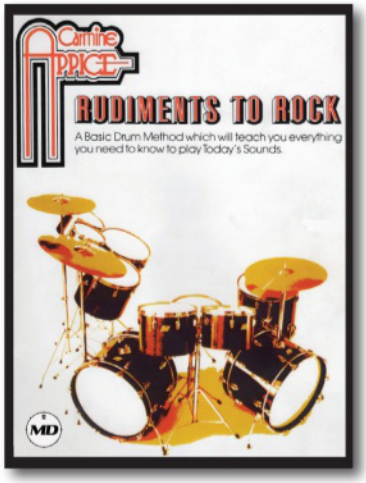
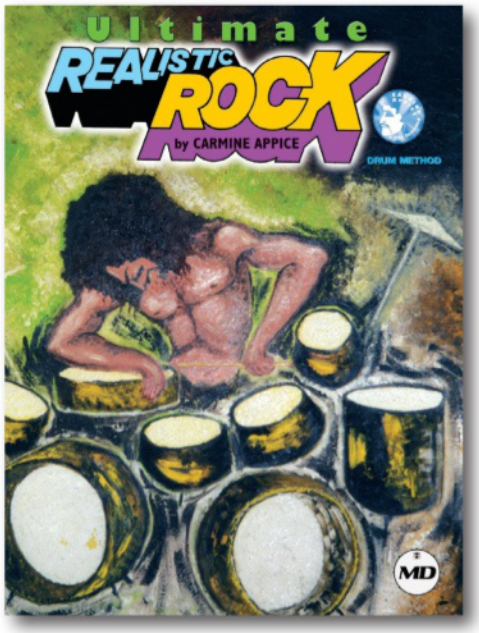
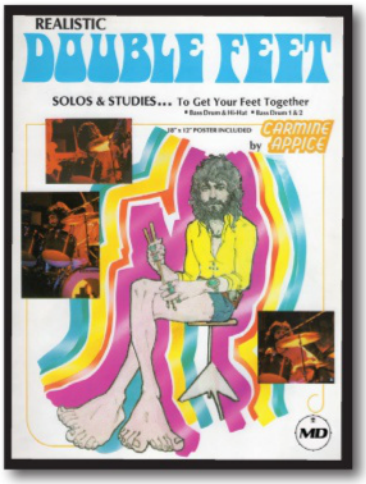
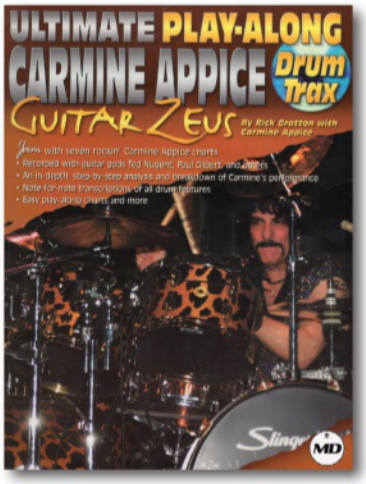
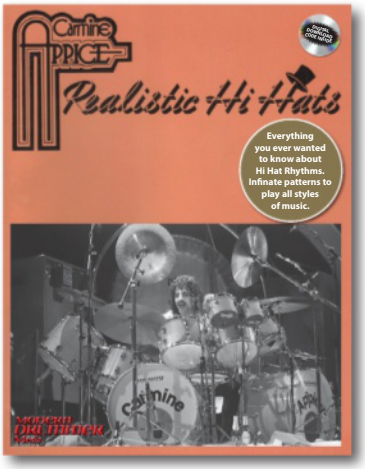
The Carmine Appice Library Collection

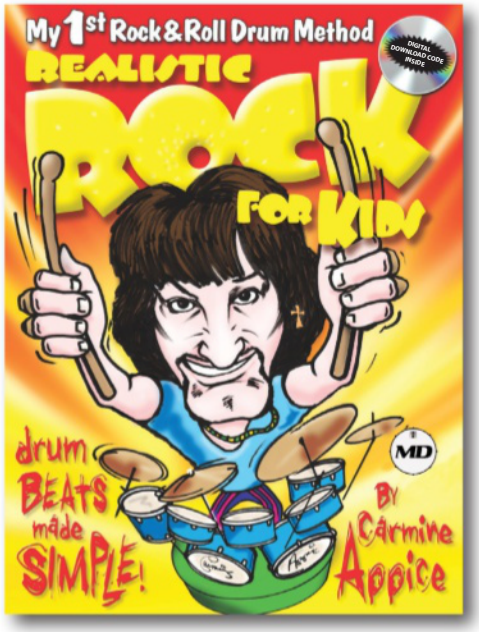


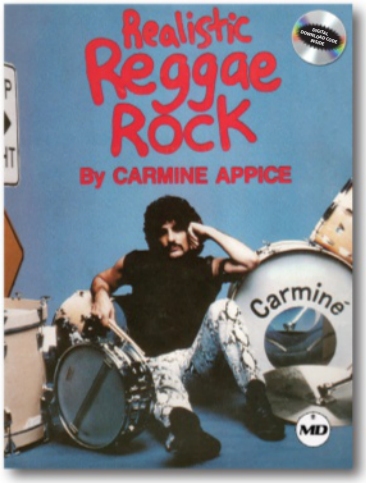












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Donn Bennett's Drum Vault:
Stan Lynch's Mitch Mitchell Inspired Ludwigs

By Donn Bennett

In 1983, Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers were on a roll. They'd been steadily cracking out gold and platinum albums and racking up hits with songs like "Breakdown," American Girl," "The Waiting," "Don't Do Me Like That," and "Refugee." The band was touring constantly and packing stadiums all over the world. This constant touring inspired Heartbreakers drummer Stan Lynch to design a new drum kit.

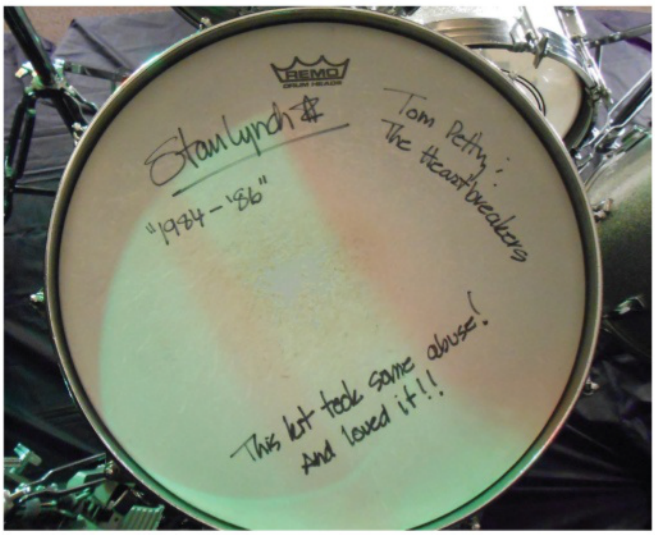
He hooked up with Joe Hibbs, Tama artist relations manager at the time, to design the set. They decided to create a set inspired by the Ludwig silver sparkle set that Mitch Mitchell played with The Jimi Hendrix Experience. Silver sparkle was not a finish that Tama offered at the time, so the finish had to be sourced from

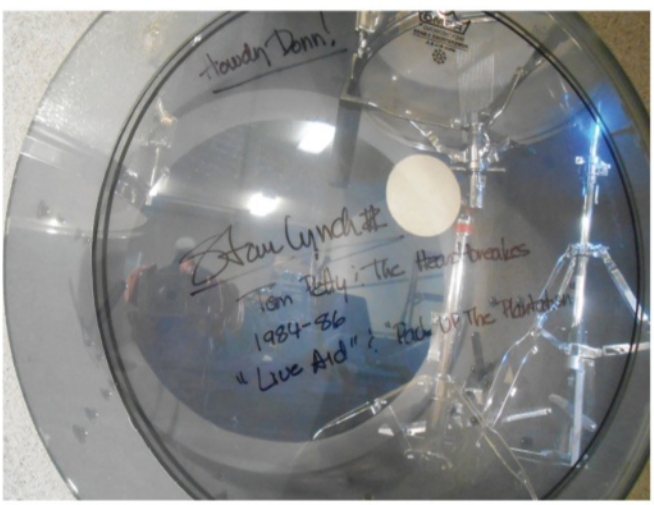
another drum company. This is the only Imperialstar drum set in silver sparkle finish that Tama ever made. Mitch Mitchell's Ludwig set had one mounted tom and two floor toms. At Hibbs' suggestion, they "floated" the two floor toms, mounting them on a double tom stand instead of traditional floor tom legs. Lynch liked a wide-open sound and the drums needed to be loud, so the stock Imperialstar internal mufflers that were standard at the time were left off.

The kit was built in what would now be considered "vintage" sizes: a 14x 22 bass drum, a 9 x 13 mounted tom, and 14x14 and 16 x 16 suspended floor toms. The snare is a steel-shell 5x14 Tama Kingbeat with a parallel throw-off. He kept the whole classic vibe going with coated Remo ambassador heads all the way around and completely cut out the front bass head. Lynch remembers the set as being really fun to play and saying, "It was frisky. It was loud, explosive, and really tunable. Our sound guy loved them."

Lynch played this set in live performances with Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers between 1984 and 1986. It can be seen and heard on the band's *Pack Up The Plantation* 1985 live concert video. In the summer of 1985, the band was invited to perform at *Live Aid*, an event to help raise funds to fight world hunger. This was the biggest musical event ever produced to date, taking place simultaneously on stages at Wembley Stadium in London, England, and JFK Stadium in Philadelphia. Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers played at JFK and their performance was seen by a worldwide audience of an estimated 1.9 billion people. This is the set Lynch played.

Stan Lynch left the Heartbreakers in 1994 and went on to become an extremely successful songwriter and producer and continues to work with some of the biggest names in the music industry. I acquired this set directly from Stan, who ironically traded me for a 1960s Ludwig silver sparkle set like the one that originally inspired this set, way back in '83.





Tama Lars Ulrich Signature Kit

The kit shown here replicates the Limited Edition Lars Ulrich Signature configuration originally created by Tama Drums for Metallica's 1992 tour. It includes two 16" X 24" bass drums; 10" X 10", 11" X 12", 13" X 14", and 15" X 16" rack toms; two 16" X 18" floor toms; and an 8" X 14" birch shell snare drum. The drums are finished in a white gloss wrap and fitted with all-black hardware. Lars' is signature is on the insides of the shells and on the front bass drum heads. Tama '90s-era heavy-duty pedals and stands complete the outfit.

This kit is featured in the book *Crash: The World's Greatest Drum Kits*, available at ***moderndrummer.com***

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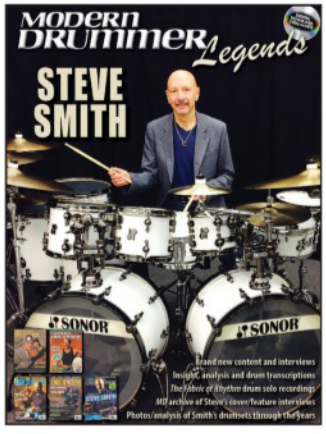
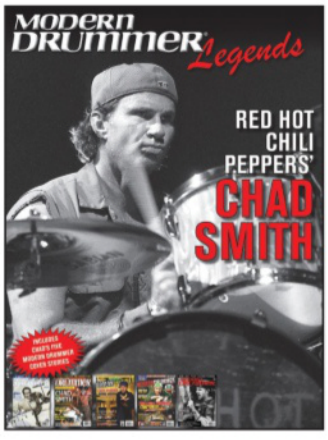
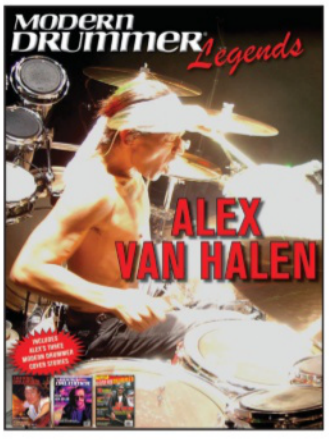
The Legends Collection







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